



# SPECIALTY EGG PRODUCTION MANUAL



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Canada 

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## 1.0 Introduction

BC's specialty production types include free run, free range, and certified organic. Free run birds are housed in an environmentally controlled barn where they are able to roam freely with unlimited access to feed and water. Free range birds are raised in barns just like free run birds and they have access to the outdoors. Certified organic birds are raised according to the Canada Organic Standards and are accredited by a certification body and/or by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA). The standards include that birds must be raised in a free range system.

BC's egg producers are committed to hen welfare and are leaders in Canada when it comes to specialty egg production. Close to 21% of the eggs produced in BC come from specialty production. Specialty eggs accounted for 28% of farm cash receipts in 2016. The remainder of BC eggs are produced by hens raised in conventional or enriched management systems.

The foundation of many animal welfare programs is the five freedoms. Canada's and BC's hen welfare programs are also based on the five freedoms. They are listed below:

1. Freedom from hunger and thirst,
2. Freedom from pain, injury, and disease,
3. Freedom from distress,
4. Freedom from discomfort, and
5. Freedom to express behaviours that promote well-being (e.g. nest building, rooting, exploration, play, socialization).

### **Background to BC's Specialty Egg Production Guidelines**

For many years BC's specialty producers followed the 2003 National *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens* and the *Interim Codes of Practice* for the care and handling of egg laying hens. These national Codes of Practice strive to promote acceptable standards of care for animals in such a way that achieves a workable balance between the welfare needs of animals and the capabilities of farmers. This code briefly discussed the requirements for free run hens, but it did not go into great detail.

In 2016, BC specialty egg producers and the BC Egg Marketing Board started the process to develop the BC-specific specialty egg production standards. Before the new standards were developed, a survey was sent to all specialty egg producers to ask about their standard management practices. The survey also provided opportunity to obtain a better grasp of current practices and create an open channel for discussion with the producers. Nearly 70% of specialty farms responded to the survey and producers were engaged and open to developing a set of standards unique to BC.

BC's own standards will ensure that all free run and free range producers within the province of BC adhere to the same animal care standards. The new standards were developed using the drafted revised code of practice as a starting point. The Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) Animal Care Program, EFC Start Clean Stay Clean Program, and the BC Poultry Biosecurity Program were utilized as much as possible in order to reduce duplication between the programs.

In order to be certified under this program, producers must also maintain their EFC Animal Care Program, EFC Start Clean Stay Clean Program and BC Poultry Biosecurity Program certifications. As the EFC Animal Care Program incorporates the updated code standards into their standards, they will be removed from this program.

The standards will provide grading stations and consumers with the assurance that BC's specialty eggs were produced under a set of minimum standards and will differentiate BC's specialty eggs from that of other provinces and imports.

### **Overview of the Specialty Egg Production Manual**

This manual brings together specialty egg production elements from the national *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens*, Egg Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program, and the new BC specialty egg production standards. The intent of this manual is not to replicate the information from the broader national programs. Instead this manual specifically targets specialty production standards and contains a summary of hen welfare requirements and guidelines. If anyone is reading this manual and would like more information on a particular standard, they are encouraged to refer to the national standard that is mentioned in the reference section.

A brief overview of the manual:

#### **Section Two**

- Provides a 151 point summary of the hen welfare audit requirements for specialty egg producers. The points are compiled from the National Code of Practice, Egg Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program, and BC's own standards.

#### **Section Three**

- Provides details on the 18 mandatory hen welfare standards from the BC specialty egg standards.

#### **Section Four**

- Provides an overview of the Egg Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program elements that pertain to specialty egg production

### **Section Five**

- Provides a copy of the new National Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens

### **Section Six**

- Provides a list of acronyms







## 2.0 Summary of Audit Requirements

This section provides a summary of the audit requirements for hen welfare. The checklist below contains 151 standards that were compiled from the National Code of Practice, Egg Farmers of Canada's Animal Care Program, and BC's own standards.

The table lists each standard by number, provides the reference in the National Code of Practice, and asks a question that shows what is expected for each standard. The checklist is divided into mandatory standards and highly recommended standards. Producers are strongly encouraged to implement the highly recommended standards.

### Housing and Equipment

2.1 Housing and Equipment		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
1	2.1	Are the barn construction materials and equipment harmful or toxic to the birds?
2	2.1	Do openings and access points permit placement of pullets and removal of layers without injury?
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
3	2.1	Is the barn on well drained land with a concrete floor?

### Flooring

2.2 Flooring		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
4	2.2	Is the flooring designed, constructed and maintained in a manner that supports the bird's feet and does not contribute to trapping, injuries or deformities to the bird's legs, feet, and/or toes?
5	2.2	Does the flooring, whether its slatted, wire, or perforated support the forward facing claws?
6	2.2	What is the maximum slope of your floor? It must not exceed 8 degrees (14%).
7	2.2	Is manure from upper levels prevented from dropping in birds at lower levels?  <i>Modifications that are necessary to meet this requirement must be completed by January 1, 2018.</i>
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
8	2.2	The smallest gap between wires or slats must not exceed 2.5 cm (~1.0 in)

## Feed and Water

2.3 Feed and Water		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
9	2.3	Is accessible feed provided at a minimum rate of 7 cm (2.8 in) per bird? ( <i>Perimeter space for round feeders and waterers can be calculated by multiplying linear space by 0.8.</i> )
10	2.3	Are the minimum water space requirements adhered to?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>A minimum of one waterer for every 12 birds, and</i></li> <li>✓ <i>At least 2 water sources (e.g., nipple drinkers, cups), or a minimum of 1 bell drinker/100 hens, or a minimum of 1.3 linear cm (0.5 in) of water trough space when straight troughs are used.</i></li> </ul>
11	4.1	Is feed and water accessible at all times and in sufficient quantities and delivered in ways that minimize aggression, poor body condition, and injuries?  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Access to water in sufficient quantities must be provided to all birds at all times in normal circumstances, up until the time of depopulation. Interruptions for the purposes of vaccinations or water system maintenance are acceptable.</i></li> </ul>
12	4.1	Do you have a back-up plan in place to maintain feed and water availability in the event of emergencies?
13	4.2	Do birds receive feed that meets their daily nutrient requirements to maintain good health, meet physiological demands, and avoid metabolic and nutritional disorders?
14	4.3	Is water palatable and safe for the hens?
15	4.a	Are feed and water consumption records kept daily?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
16	2.3	Is additional accessible feed provided to allow more hens to feed simultaneously if required?
17	2.3	Are nipple drinkers and cups positioned at least 15.0 cm (5.9 in) apart on each water line?
18	2.3	Is more feed space added if overcrowding is observed?
19	2.3	Are feed trough heights set so that birds do not have to perch to feed, but can stand on the floor?
20	4.1	Are water interruptions limited to less than 4 hours during the lighting period?
21	4.2	Are feed formulations and particle sizes matched to the different growth stages and housing system of the bird?
22	4.2	Are insoluble grits and particle sizes provided to the hens at appropriate ages?
23	4.2	Is feed consumption monitored recorded daily; and the cause investigated if feed consumption declines?

2.3 Feed and Water cont.		
#	Ref.	Highly Recommended
24	4.2	Are growth rates monitored by regularly weighing representative samples of birds in each location and age group?
25	4.2	Is feeding regime monitored for effectiveness using body weight, egg quality and production?
26	4.3	Is the water test taken from the end of the water line?
27	4.3	Is water consumption recorded daily?

## Space Allowance

2.5.1 Space Allowance		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
28	2.5.1	Is a minimum height of 45.0 cm (17.7 in) provided between the floor and ceiling of each level?
29	2.5.1	<p><b>Transitional space requirements effective January 1, 2020</b></p> <p>Is the minimum useable space allowance provided for those systems installed prior to April 1, 2017?</p> <p>✓ <i>For non-cage systems installed prior to April 1, 2017 that have at least 50% of the useable space as slats or wires, each hen must be provided with the following minimum useable space allowance (which does not include nest space):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>929.0 cm<sup>2</sup> (144.0 sq in/1.0 sq ft) if a minimum of 15.2 cm (6.0 in) of perch space per hen is provided</i></li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>1,115 cm<sup>2</sup> (172.8 sq in/1.2 sq ft) if perch space of at least 7.6 cm (3.0 in), but less than 15.2 cm (6.0 in) per hen is provided.</i></li> </ul>
30	2.5.1	<p><b>Final space requirements Effective April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Is the minimum useable space allowance provided for those systems installed, newly built or rebuilt after April 1, 2017?</p> <p>✓ <i>For non-cage systems, each hen must be provided with the following minimum useable space allowance (which does not include nest space):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Single-tier – all litter barns:</b> 1,900.0 cm<sup>2</sup> (294.5 sq in/2.05 sq ft);</li> <li>○ <b>Single-tier or multi-tier – combination of wire, slats, litter:</b> 929.0 cm<sup>2</sup> (144.0 sq in/1.0 sq ft)</li> </ul>

## Nesting

2.5.2 Nesting		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
31	2.5.2	Is the nest space enclosed on all three sides to provide privacy and shading?
32	2.5.2	Do curtains extend close to the floor (without impeding the flow of eggs)?
33	2.5.2	Does the nest area contain drinkers, feeders and perches? It must not.
34	2.5.2	Is there at least 15.2 cm (6.0 in) between the nest area and useable feed trough?
35	2.5.2	Is the floor of the nest area covered with a surface that promotes nesting and prevents injury?
36	2.5.2	<p><b>Final requirements effective January 1, 2020 or all new construction initiated after April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Is each hen provided with a minimum nest space area of 83.2 cm<sup>2</sup>?</p> <p>✓ <i>For non-cage systems installed prior to April 1, 2017:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Each hen must be provided with a minimum nest space area of 83.2 cm<sup>2</sup> (12.9 sq in) [1 m<sup>2</sup> (10.8 sq ft) for each 120 hens]</i></li> <li>○ <i>Nest space must not be included when calculating useable space allowance.</i></li> </ul>
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
37	2.5.2	Are nests easily accessible to hens and at a height to prevent injuries that could occur as hens ascend or descend?
38	2.5.2	<p>Are strategies incorporated to encourage hens to use the middle nests in rows of continual nests?</p> <p><i>For example create more corners by using partitions or crossovers, provide extra substrate.</i></p>



## Perching

2.5.3 Perching		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
39	2.5.3	<p><b>Transitional requirements effective January 1, 2020</b></p> <p>Is each hen provided with a minimum of 7.6 cm of perch space for systems installed prior to April 1, 2017?</p> <p>✓ <i>For non-cage systems installed prior to April 1, 2017, each hen must be provided with a minimum of 7.6 linear cm (3.0 in) of useable, purpose designed, elevated perch space (When calculating useable perch space, 30.0 cm (11.8 in) must be subtracted from the total linear length for each intersection of crossed perches)</i></p>
40	2.5.3	<p><b>Final requirements effective January 1, 2020</b></p> <p>Is each hen provided with a minimum of 15.2 cm of perch space for systems installed after to April 1, 2017?</p> <p>✓ <i>For non-cage systems installed after to April 1, 2017, each hen must be provided with a minimum linear length of 15.2 cm (6.0 in) of useable, purpose designed, elevated perch space. (When calculating useable perch space, 30.0 cm (11.8 in) must be subtracted from the total linear length for each intersection of crossed perches.)</i></p>
41	2.5.3	Are perches positioned to minimize fecal fouling of birds, feeders or drinkers located below them?
42	2.5.3	Are perches designed to minimize injury to hens that are mounting or dismounting as well as to any hens nearby?
43	2.5.3	Does perch space extend into the nest, dust bathing or foraging areas? <i>It must not.</i>
44	2.5.3	Are perches at least 1.9 cm in diameter to allow hens to wrap their toes around the perch and balance evenly on it in a relaxed perching posture?
45	2.5.3	Is 20% of the perch space elevated a minimum of 40.0 cm (15.7 in)?
46	2.5.3	Are perches at least 19.0 cm (7.5 in) from walls and the ceiling or other structures?
47	2.5.3	Are adjacent perches at least 30.0 cm (11.8 in) apart horizontally to allow hens to perch simultaneously?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
48	2.5.3	Are hollow ends of perches capped? <i>They should be.</i>
49	2.5.3	<p>Are perches used that minimize keel, foot and nail damage?</p> <p>✓ <i>They should not have sharp edges; instead oval or mushroom shaped perches should be used.</i></p>
50	2.5.3	Do your multiple perches vary in diameter?
51	2.5.3	Is the angle between perches of different heights limited to 45 degrees or less?
52	2.5.3	Is the distance between perches at the same height limited to 1.0 m or less (39.4 in)?
53	2.5.3	Are perches positioned over slats or manure belts to avoid buildup of manure?

## Foraging and Dust Bathing

2.5.4 Foraging and Dust Bathing		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
54	2.5.4	<p><b>Transitional Requirement Effective April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Is a solid surface area of at least 1.5m<sup>2</sup> for litter/substrate for dust bathing provided for each 1,000 hens where 15% of useable space is litter for systems installed prior to April 1, 2017?</p> <p>✓ <i>For <b>single-tier</b> systems installed prior to April 1, 2017 that are fully slatted or where less than 15% of useable space is litter, a solid surface area of at least 1.5 m<sup>2</sup> (16.0 sq ft) that contains substrate for dust bathing must be provided for each 1,000 hens. Where multiple sites are provided, they must be evenly distributed.</i></p>
55	2.5.4	<p><b>Final Requirements Effective April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Are hens in litter based systems provided with continuous access to litter?</p>
56	3.5	Is litter condition monitored and managed to avoid levels of dustiness or dampness that could cause leg, respiratory or other health problems such as the buildup of parasites, or diseases?
57	3.5	Is litter removed between flocks?
58	2.5.4	<p><b>Final Requirements Effective April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Are hens in <b>multi-tier</b> systems provided with 33% litter?</p> <p>✓ <i>Except for up to 24 weeks of age when the litter may be reduced to a minimum of 15% of the useable space.</i></p>
59	2.5.4	<p><b>Final Requirements Effective April 1, 2017</b></p> <p>Are hens in <b>single-tier</b> systems provided with at least 15% useable space as litter with a minimum of one foraging site for each 1,500 hens?</p> <p>✓ <i>For example bales of hay or straw, insoluble grit or oat hulls, or other material that provides foraging opportunities. Where multiple sites are provided, they must be evenly distributed.</i></p>
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
60	2.5.4	Do you provide foraging materials in a variety of locations and formats in such a way that hens can access it from as many sides as possible and allows hens to dust bathe as a group?
61	2.5.4	Is the foraging surface easily cleaned?
62	2.5.4	Do you provide ramps between the scratch area and slats to aid movement between the areas?
63	2.5.4	Do you prevent birds from perching over foraging/dust bathing areas?
64	2.5.4	Do you provide a variety of foraging materials that consist of nutritional enrichment such as bales of hay or straw, insoluble grit or oat hulls?

2.5.4 Foraging and Dust Bathing cont.		
#	Ref.	Highly Recommended
65	3.5	When litter is used, what is your minimum litter depth?  ✓ <i>You should start with a minimum 1.0 cm (0.4 in) of litter, and gradually build up to a depth of 3.0 cm (1.2 in) or more. Balance depth of litter in such a way so as to minimize dust, absorb moisture to prevent caking, as well as to prevent eggs from being laid on the floor.</i>
66	3.5	If used, are wood shavings dry and from non-treated wood?

### Special Considerations for Multi-Tier Systems

2.6 Special Considerations for Multi-Tier Systems		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
67	2.6	Are birds placed on the system near feed or water when placed in the barn?
68	2.6	Is a minimum height of 45.0 cm (17.7 in) provided between all tiers; including the floor level?
69	2.6	Are tiers arranged to prevent droppings from falling directly in tiers below excluding perches, terraces and ramps/ladders?
70	2.6	Do you have a maximum of four tiers, including the floor?
71	2.6	Do you have a manure removal system that does not interfere with the birds or cause injury?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
72	2.6	Are ramps used with angles less than 45 degrees to facilitate movement between levels?
73	2.6	Is litter removed from the floor periodically to maintain the minimum height clearance of 45.0 cm (17.7 in)?
74	2.6	Is one manure belt used for each tier?



Access to Outdoors – Only required for free-range hens

2.7.1 Access to Outdoors		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
75	2.7.1	Do the birds have easy and continuous access to shelter from the elements that meets the temperature and hygiene needs of the birds?
76	1.a	Are outdoor access openings a minimum of 36 cm (14 in) high and 51 cm (20 in) wide?
77	2.7.1	Are you able to restrict outdoor access if necessary?
78	2.b	Is a perimeter fence provided and maintained to protect birds from ground predators? The fence must be a minimum 4 feet high and tight to the ground.
79	2.7.1	Are the door openings designed to minimize the adverse effects of weather? (Refer to Section 3.5: Litter Management)
80	2.d	Are any feeders or drinkers available in the range? They must not be.
81	1.c	Is there a minimum of one 3'8" opening for each 1,000 birds?
82	1.d	What is the maximum distance to the nearest door from inside the barn? Maximum distance to the nearest door is 49 feet when measured at floor height
83	1.e	How many days per lay cycle do the birds have access to the range? Birds must have access to range for a minimum of 120 days.
84	2.f	How many hours for each of these days is the range available?  ✓ <i>Birds must be allowed a minimum of six hours-access to range to qualify for one day.</i>
85	3	At what age are hens first granted access to the range?  ✓ <i>Outdoor access may be restricted as the birds are learning to lay in the nests; it must be completed by 28 weeks of age.</i>



## 2.7.1 Access to Outdoors cont.

#	Ref.	Mandatory
86	3	<p>Barns with winter gardens - do you have a transition period and how long is it?</p> <p>✓ <i>Outdoor access may be restricted for a training phase as the birds are learning to lay in the nests. This phase must be completed by 28 weeks of age.</i></p>
87	4.b	Is range availability as well as opening and closing times for outside access documented?
88	4.c 4.d	<p>If outside access is restricted, do you document reasons why?</p> <p>✓ <i>Access does not need to be provided if the daily forecasted high is below 15°C or above 30°C.</i></p> <p>✓ <i>If access is restricted due to health challenges, a veterinarian's documentation is required.</i></p> <p>✓ <i>If access is restricted due to high biosecurity risks, proof of risk is required (notice from BC's Chief Veterinarian Officer or the BC Poultry Biosecurity Committee)</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Weather conditions must be documented daily (rain, snow, sun, overcast, etc)</i></p>
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
89	1.b	Is the maximum distance between the floor and the bottom of the door 51cm (20 in)?
90	2.e	Is shade or shelter available in the range?
91	2.7.1	Do you have eaves troughs and drainage to control and direct water runoff?
92	2.7.1	Do you have a winter garden with an overhang along with concrete, pea gravel, sand or like material just outside the entrances/exits so as to reduce the potential for mud holes?
93	2.7.1	Do you minimize direct sunlight penetration into the barn by using awnings or overhangs above the openings?



## Range Management – Only required for free-range hens

2.7.2 Range Management		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
94	2.h	Is the range free of debris?
95	2.a	Is there a minimum of 1.5 ft <sup>2</sup> of range space per bird?
96	2.c	Is the range free of standing water within 48 hours of rainfall?
97	2.g	Is 50% of the range covered in forage?  ✓ Allowances are made for reseeded (maximum 4 weeks per year).
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
98	2.7.2	Is your range free of items, such as poisonous plants, dangerous chemicals, and disease causing organisms that can cause harm to the hens?
99	2.7.2	Is your stocking density appropriate for you range space so that it does not detrimentally impact the range's ability to maintain vegetation?
100	2.7.2	Do you provide windbreaks where there is a likelihood of strong winds?
101	2.7.2	What strategies do you utilize to reduce predation?  ✓ For example; use electric fencing outside enclosures; use fine netting over enclosures; bury portion of fence to prevent ground predators from entering; attach kites to barns and/or feeders to discourage aerial predators.

## Ventilation & Air Quality

3.1 Ventilation & Air Quality		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
102	3.1	Are ammonia levels kept below 20 ppm?
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
103	3.1	Is relative humidity maintained between 50% and 70% as a primary step to maintaining good air quality?
104	3.1	Is manure removed frequently to reduce both humidity and ammonia levels?
105	3.1	Are ammonia levels monitored on a weekly basis? Is monitoring frequency increased during cold and/or humid weather?

## Temperature

3.2 Temperature		
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
106	3.2	Are birds protected against cold drafts, cold areas and extreme heat?
107	3.2	Are temperature alarms present for the barn that relay alarms if barn temperatures deviate from set points (high and low)?
108	3.2	Are interior barn temperatures maintained according to breed standards?
109	3.2	Is supplemental heat provided in the layer barns to maintain optimal air quality and temperature?

## Noise

3.3 Noise		
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
110	3.3	Are sound levels minimized and are constant loud or sudden noises avoided?
111	3.3	Is your equipment operating properly to cause the least possible noise?
112	3.3	Do you expose your birds to background noise to help prevent birds from becoming startled from sudden, unexpected, or planned (e.g., construction) noise?

## Lighting

3.4 Lighting		
<b>#</b>	<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Mandatory</b>
113	3.4	Do you follow a lighting program that includes a minimum average of 10 lux so that hens can navigate their surroundings?
114	3.4	Does your lighting program include a sunrise/sunset period when turning your lights on and off to give them sufficient time to roost and come off perches without causing injury?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
115	3.4	Does your lighting schedule include a minimum of 8 hours of darkness per 24 hour period?
116	3.4	Is your lighting system in good working order?
117	3.4	Do you measure and record light intensities on a regular basis?
118	3.4	Do you use poultry specific light sources that provide a broad spectrum of light wavelength that supports the complex visual systems of the birds?

## Pullet Sourcing

5.1 Pullet Sourcing		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
119	5.1	Are pullets sourced from a similar production system to the lay barn?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
120	5.1	Do you transfer pullets a few days prior to expected start of lay?
121	5.1	Do you coordinate layer and pullet lighting regimes and temperatures?

## Health Management Plan

5.2 Health Management Plan		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
122	5.2	Has a working relationship with a veterinarian been established??
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
123	5.2	Have you developed a health management plan with your poultry veterinarian?

## Skills Related to Flock Management

5.3 Skills Related to Flock Management		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
124	5.3	Are personnel knowledgeable in poultry husbandry?  ✓ <i>Personnel must be knowledgeable of normal bird behaviour and signs of poor health, distress, and behaviour problems, or must work in conjunction with experienced personnel.</i>

## Sick and Injured Birds

5.6 Sick and Injured Birds		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
125	5.6	<p>What do you do with sick or injured birds?</p> <p>✓ <i>Sick or injured birds must be promptly treated or euthanized. Birds that have been identified as sick or injured must be monitored at least twice daily or at a frequency appropriate to their conditions. If not showing signs of recovery, birds must be euthanized in accordance with the on-farm euthanasia plan.</i></p>
126	5.6	<p>What do you do if you suspect you have a reportable disease?</p> <p>✓ <i>Any suspected cases of reportable diseases must be reported to a veterinarian or the BC Animal Health Centre immediately</i></p>
127	5.6	<p>When and how would you use medication, vaccines or supplements?</p> <p>✓ <i>Medication, vaccines, and supplements must be used only in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions unless veterinary advice has been given to vary from the directions</i></p>
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
128	5.6	<p>Are birds checked periodically for parasitic infections?</p>



## Harmful Behaviour

5.7 Harmful Behaviour		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
129	5.7.1	What do you do if you have an outbreak of feather pecking or cannibalism?
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
130	5.7	Do you observe the flock for durations of at least 10 minutes to assess behaviour?
131	5.7	Do you select the most appropriate breeds for your production method?
132	5.7	<p>Do you adjust your feed, lighting or environmental factors if birds display harmful behaviour?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ <i>Analyze and adjust feed form and composition if birds display harmful behaviour (e.g., injurious feather pecking, toe pecking, and cannibalism).</i></li><li>✓ <i>Seek guidance from veterinarians and/or qualified advisors about feed composition as a way of preventing or minimizing feather pecking within the flock.</i></li><li>✓ <i>Examine and make adjustments to environmental factors (e.g., enrichments, foraging, lighting, barn temperature) should an outbreak of feather pecking or cannibalism occur, or an outbreak appears imminent</i></li></ul>



## On Farm Beak Trimming

5.7.1.1 On Farm Beak Trimming		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
133	5.7.1.1	<p>What portion of the beak was removed?</p> <p>✘ <i>Do not remove more than one third of the top beak, as measured from the tip to the entrance of the nostrils</i></p>
134	5.7.1	Were you available throughout the process?
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
135	5.7.1	<p>Do you monitor beak condition as well as feed and water consumption after trimming until beaks are healed?</p> <p>✓ <i>Feed levels should be raised and water pressure may have to be lowered, or waterers manually triggered for several days following trimming. Follow breeder recommendations for changes in feed to minimize weight loss.</i></p>
136	5.7.1	Do you provide an electrolyte solution containing vitamin K approximately two to three days before and two to three days after beak trimming to facilitate blood clotting, to alleviate stress, and to reduce dehydration?
137	5.7.1	Do you monitor crews and provide feedback?

## Panic, Hysteria, and Smothering

5.7.2 Panic, Hysteria, and Smothering		
<b>Highly Recommended</b>		
138	5.7.2	<p>What procedures do you follow to reduce excitement in the flock?</p> <p>✓ <i>Talk and move quietly when working in the barn or with birds</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Incorporate a protocol to ensure attendants working with the same groups of birds wear clothing of similar appearance during the whole production cycle</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Use caution when approaching birds to perform duties that are different from the normal routine</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Give the same, easily perceptible signal (such as a distinct number of knocks on the door) before entering a barn</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Expose birds to background noise</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Carry out routine activities consistently and according to a schedule</i></p> <p>✓ <i>Monitor nest boxes for signs of overcrowding in non-cage housing systems when flocks are coming into lay</i></p>

## Controlled Moulting

5.8 Controlled Moulting		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
139	5.8	Did you moult your flock? Why? Controlled moulting must not be undertaken unless in emergency situations
140	5.8	What method of moulting did you use?  ✓ <i>When necessary, controlled moulting must be induced using methods that do not involve feed withdrawal, and water must be available at all times</i>
141	5.8	Was veterinary and nutritionist oversight provided?

## Emergency Management and Preparedness

5.9 Emergency Management and Preparedness		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
142	5.9	Do you have an emergency plan?  ✓ <i>An emergency plan for reasonably foreseeable problems that may affect bird welfare must be prepared and reviewed with all personnel</i> ✓ <i>Emergency contact information must be readily available</i> ✓ <i>At least one responsible individual must be available at all times to take necessary steps in the case of an emergency</i>
		<b>Highly Recommended</b>
143	5.9	Is the emergency plan kept in a location where it can be easily be seen or found plan?
144	5.9	How often is it reviewed?  ✓ <i>Review the plan annually as well as after an incident or any significant change in farm operations</i> ✓ <i>Review emergency management protocols with personnel annually</i>
145	5.9	Do you have an alarm system to alert personnel of failures of critical systems (e.g. ventilation, feed, water, electrical power)?



## Handling and Transportation

6.0 Handling and Transportation		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
146	6.1.1	<p>When is feed withdrawn prior to loading?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Pre-transport feed withdrawal must be managed to minimize the time that birds are off feed</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Hens must be fed an appropriate layer ration until feed is withdrawn to maintain bone strength</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Withdraw feed from end of lay hens at least 3 hours, and no more than 6 hours prior to catching, but withdrawal of feed should not exceed 24 hours in total prior to slaughter</i></li> </ul>
147	6.2	<p>Do you evaluate the hens for fitness to transport?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>In preparation for transport, the flock must be evaluated for fitness and those birds that are deemed unfit for transport must be euthanized, separated, or transported for veterinary assessment or treatment only</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Birds that are not loaded for transport must continue to be cared for in accordance with relevant sections of this Code</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Birds that are visibly sick, injured, or wet, or birds otherwise deemed unfit for transport, must not be loaded</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Communicate with the transporter and/or processor about any changes in the flock condition prior to loading</i></li> </ul>
148	6.3	<p>Do you oversee the catching crew throughout the catching process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Crews must be overseen by the producer or a competent designated representative who must be readily available throughout the catching and loading process</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Corrective action must be taken if crews or individuals are observed handling birds in way that compromise their welfare</i></li> <li>✓ <i>All on-farm and contracted personnel involved in catching must be competent in handling birds, and must not handle birds in such a manner that causes injury or distress</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Birds must be placed in transport containers gently and in a manner that allows them to rapidly regain an upright position</i></li> <li>✓ <i>When catching birds, light intensity must be low enough to keep birds calm</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Easy access to each cage must be provided for catchers</i></li> </ul>

6.0 Handling and Transportation Cont		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
149	6.4	<p>Do you oversee the catching crew throughout the loading process?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>The design, construction, space, state of repair, and use of container and equipment must allow the birds to be loaded, conveyed, and unloaded in ways that minimize stress and/or injury</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Containers with birds must be handled, moved, securely positioned on vehicles, and unloaded in a manner that minimizes stress and/or injury to birds</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Measures must be taken to minimize the amount of time birds are kept in an inverted position during loading</i></li> <li>✓ <i>The number of birds in each container must be determined prior to loading, taking into consideration the available container floor space, body size/weight, prevailing environmental conditions and duration of transport</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Birds must be loaded in containers in such a way that permits all of them to rest on the floor at the same time when evenly distributed</i></li> </ul>
150	6.5	<p>When building or renovating, do you consider bird movement into and out of the barn to facilitating safe and humane transfer of birds to and from the transport vehicles (e.g., tractor trailer)?</p>

## Euthanasia

7.0 Euthanasia		
#	Ref.	Mandatory
151	7.4	<p>Is equipment used for euthanasia well maintained and used correctly?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>All equipment used for euthanasia must be well maintained, used correctly, and not overloaded, so that it operates effectively and efficiently</i></li> <li>✓ <i>The effectiveness of the application used must be evaluated, and action taken (e.g., repair, replace, alternative method employed) when failure occurs.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>An alternate backup euthanasia method must be readily available whenever birds are euthanized, in case the primary method fails</i></li> </ul>

## 3.0 BC's Range Standards

BC has developed its own set of mandatory range hen welfare standards. This section provides information on BC's standards and why the standards are important.

### 3.1 Outdoor Access Openings

Outdoor access openings, sometimes referred to as pop-holes, must be designed and in sufficient quantity to ensure free movement of the birds and for ready, unrestricted access of the birds into and out of the house. It must also limit undue crowding of birds around the openings. The openings must be evenly distributed across any building walls that have openings to the exterior. The BC program has six mandatory standards for outdoor access openings.



#	Ref	Mandatory Standards
1	1.a	<p>✓ Outdoor access openings must be at least 14" high and 20" wide.</p> <p><i>This allows for the passage of more than one hen at a time. The openings must be high enough so that hens can always see the range from inside the barn unobstructed by other hens.</i></p>
2	1.c	<p>✓ There must be a minimum of one 3'8" opening for each 1,000 birds.</p> <p><i>This ensures the number of openings correlates to the number of birds to prevent crowding at outdoor access points.</i></p>
3	1.d	<p>✓ The maximum distance to the nearest door from inside the barn is 49' when measured at floor height.</p> <p><i>This ensures the hens have ready access to the outdoors.</i></p>
4	1.e	<p>✓ Birds must have access to range for a minimum of one-third of their laying life from 26 weeks of age. A guideline is 120 days.</p> <p><i>This ensures that BC's range birds spend a large period of their lives with access to the outdoors.</i></p>
5	2.f	<p>✓ Birds must be allowed a minimum of six hours access to range to qualify for one day.</p> <p><i>This standard ensures birds are truly kept outside each day.</i></p>

### 3.2 Range Area

The range area is very important in overall hen health and welfare. Proper design, management and maintenance of your range is very important. The BC program has six mandatory standards for the range area.



#	Ref	Mandatory Standards
6	2.a	<p>✓ There must be a minimum of 1.5 ft<sup>2</sup> of range space per bird.</p> <p><i>Your range area must be large enough for your flock; the bigger your flock; the bigger your range has to be. Over stocking the range area results in the depletion of vegetation that negatively affects hen health. <b>The actual size of the range is not what is important. What is more important is how well the range is managed.</b></i></p>
7	2.b	<p>✓ The range area must be fenced to a minimum of 4' high and tight to the ground.</p> <p><i>To keep hens in and predators out; your range area must be fenced.</i></p>
8	2.c	<p>✓ The range area must be free of standing water within 48 hrs of rainfall.</p> <p><i>For bird health, the range area must be free of standing water. A well-drained range is needed to give your hens a place to rest.</i></p>
9	2.d	<p>✓ No feeders or drinkers should be present in the range.</p>
10	2.g	<p>✓ A minimum of 50% of outside area must be covered with forage. Allowances are made for reseeding (4 weeks per year).</p> <p><i>The range area must be covered in vegetation to provide appropriate foraging opportunities for hens. Producers are encouraged to have an active management plan for any damaged areas of the range that includes rotation, reseeding, and exclusion to encourage the regrowth of vegetation when the climate allows.</i></p>
11	2.h	<p>✓ The range must be free of debris.</p> <p><i>Debris can provide a home for pests.</i></p>
		Highly Recommended
12	1.b	<p>✓ The maximum distance between the floor and the bottom of the door must be 51cm (20 in)?</p>
13	2.e	<p>✓ Shade or shelter should be available in range.</p> <p>✓ This can be either manmade or natural and is an important part of protecting hens from rain and heat.</p>

### 3.3 Training Period

*Hens require a period of time to learn where to lay their eggs. This is a normal farm practice that the standards provide limited allowances for. The BC program has two mandatory standards for the training period.*

**M**

#	Ref	Mandatory Standards
14	3	<p>✓ Outdoor access may be restricted as the birds are learning to lay in the nests. This must be completed by 28 weeks of age.</p> <p><i>The standards acknowledge that outdoor access may be restricted as hens learn where to lay eggs.</i></p>
15	3	<p>✓ Barns with a winter garden can begin a transition period into the winter garden, prior to providing range access. This must begin by 28 weeks of age and last for a maximum of two weeks.</p> <p><i>The standards acknowledge that a transition period to winter gardens may occur before hens are allowed access to range.</i></p>



### 3.4 Record Keeping

Record keeping is an important farm management tool. The BC range program has four mandatory standards for record keeping.



#	Ref.	Mandatory Standards
15	4.a	<p>✓ Feed and water consumption must be recorded daily.</p> <p><i>Feed and water consumption is an important indicator of overall flock health. For example an unexplained drop in feed or water over two consecutive days may be the first sign of avian influenza. Recording this data is part of basic good flock management.</i></p>
16	4.b	<p>✓ Documentation for days on range as well as opening and closing times for outside access must be kept.</p> <p><i>This is crucial to demonstrate how many days the birds had access to their range and how many hours each day they had access to the range. It goes back to assuring BC consumers that range birds truly have access to range a minimum number of days per year and hours per day.</i></p>
17	4.c	<p>✓ Outside temperature and weather conditions (rain, snow, sun, overcast, etc.) must be documented daily.</p> <p><i>Outdoor weather conditions can detrimentally impact hen health and certain weather conditions results in limiting range access. Documenting the daily weather shows why you denied hens' access to the outdoors. It is a good management practice.</i></p>
18	4.d	<p>✓ If outside access is restricted, documents must state why.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Access does not need to be provided if the daily forecasted high is below 15°C or above 30°C.</li> <li>○ If access is restricted due to health challenges, a veterinarian's note is required.</li> <li>○ If access is restricted due to high biosecurity risks, proof of risk is required (notice from BC's Chief Veterinarian Officer or the BC Poultry Biosecurity Committee).</li> </ul> <p><i>Hen welfare must not be compromised by outdoor weather conditions.</i></p>

## 4.0 Egg Farmers of Canada Animal Care Program



*This section includes a copy of the EFC animal care program policies as they pertain to specialty production and background on why the policies were implemented.*

### 4.1 Introduction

The Egg Farmers of Canada (EFC) Animal Care Program (ACP) is the Canadian egg industry's national program for ensuring high standards of animal care are consistently applied across the country. The program is delivered by either a 3<sup>rd</sup> party auditor, or a combination of 3<sup>rd</sup> party and EFC field inspector, depending on the Province/Territory. In BC, one third of the ACP audits are conducted by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party each year, the remaining are completed by an EFC field inspector.

Retail, food service companies, and other industry stakeholders expect a consistent single national program. The national program ensures that consistent minimum standards are met across Canada.

EFC's ACP standards have three different types of elements that correspond to their significance to the program, overall impact to animal welfare, and visibility to the public standard to the program. The three elements are:

#### **Critical Care Element (CCE)**

These elements are *very important* to the program, and if missed on the audit will result in a non-conformance, which triggers the corrective action process. All of the requirements must be met in order to be in conformance. There are no partial points on these elements.

#### **Care Element (CE)**

This type of element is *also important, but will not immediately result in a non-conformance to the program, unless two care elements are missed on the audit.* If one is missed alone, the points are lost and the corrective action request (CAR) is given. If two are missed, then it is considered a non-conformance (NC), and the corrective action process is triggered.

### General Element (GE)

This type of element is usually scored between 5 and 20 points, and if missed on the audit will trigger the corrective action process, and points will be lost until the CAR has been resolved.

## 4.2 EFC's Animal Care Program Requirements for Specialty Egg Production

### 4.2.1 General Management

Ref	Element	Element
2.1	CCE	<b>Farm Animal Welfare Policy</b>  <i>This element shows a documented commitment to animal care principles by the farm ownership. This declaration by the farmer is an important first step in bringing the program in line with expectations of stakeholders. EFC has provided producers with a standard form that meets these requirements.</i>
2.1.1		✓ This policy must include an emphasis on the commitment of the farmer to foster a culture of understanding towards animal care principles and requirements and to pass the EFC ACP audit.  <i>As a minimum the Policy must contain a statement showing a commitment to strive to foster a culture of understanding towards animal care principles and requirements or something similar such as: "...strive to meet requirements of the EFC Animal Care Program."</i>
2.1.2		✓ The farm must have a zero tolerance policy that states that any form of abuse towards the birds is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.  <i>As a minimum the policy must contain statement(s) containing commitment to zero tolerance for any abuse, neglect, cruelty, or mistreatment of birds. For example:</i>  ✓ <i>It is the responsibility of every manager, employee and/or visitor to continuously watch for employees or other persons who may engage in animal cruelty, abuse and/or neglect of the birds.</i> ✓ <i>All employees who work here understand that we have a zero tolerance policy towards unacceptable treatment of our animals. Any form of abuse, neglect, cruelty, or mistreatment of the birds under our care will not be tolerated and may be grounds for immediate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. All incidents of potential animal abuse, neglect or cruelty will be reported to management immediately. Proper care of our animals is a high priority and important because it is the right thing to do.</i>
2.1.3		✓ Policy is reviewed, signed and dated by farmer annually and kept on record.



Ref	Element	Element
2.2	CCE	<p><b>Employee Code of Conduct</b></p> <p><i>This element ensures that anyone working on the farm acknowledges their understanding of what is expected of them while they perform their work, as it relates to animal care. By signing, employees understand their responsibility to ensure proper care, and report improper care of birds. EFC has provided producers with a standard form that meets these requirements.</i></p>
2.2.1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Employee Code must be provided to and signed annually by personnel who work within the production unit on the farm (“employees”).</li> </ul>
2.2.2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ These employees must also acknowledge having read and understood the Farm Animal Welfare Policy annually by signing the Employee Code of Conduct.</li> </ul>
2.2.3		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Employee Code of Conduct includes the following minimum requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Birds are to be handled in a positive and compassionate manner at all times and any abuse or mistreatment is prohibited</li> <li>✓ Employees are expected to report any witnessed abuse or mistreatment immediately to a manager.</li> <li>✓ Employees understand and acknowledge the basic requirements for maintaining birds, including suitable feed, water, lighting, ventilation, temperature control, and will notify the manager immediately if any of these basic needs are lacking.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



Ref	Element	Element
2.3	CE	<p><b>Visitor Policy and Code of Conduct</b></p> <p><i>This element to the program builds on what farmers do already in logging visitors, but ensures that visitors to the production unit understand and acknowledge their responsibilities with respect to animal care. EFC has provided producers with a standard form that meets these requirements.</i></p> <p><i>Visitor policy must be available for review by visitor prior to signing log and must include as a minimum:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Birds are to be handled in a positive and compassionate manner at all times and any abuse or mistreatment is prohibited.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Visitors are expected to contribute to upholding high standards of animal welfare.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Visitors must abide by any policy, procedure, or instruction from farm representatives that could affect the welfare of the birds.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>All visitors must follow the individual farm's on-farm biosecurity protocols while on the farm.</i></li> <li>✓ <i>I have read and agree to meet the above conditions under which visitors are allowed to visit [farm name].</i></li> </ul>
2.3.1		✓ The Visitor Policy must be available in the existing visitor log book or other method for review by visitors.
2.3.2		✓ The visitor log book must clearly state that all visitors are required to review the Visitor Policy.
2.3.3		✓ All visitors have signed the logbook, acknowledging their understanding of the commitments associated with the Visitor Policy.



Ref	Element	Element
2.5	CCE	<p><b>Routine Inspection</b></p> <p><i>Although farmers inspect their birds already, this element ensures that the process is documented, and provides specific requirements for what is to be inspected and at what frequency. Consistency on all farms is a key expectation of retail and foodservice customers, so having daily inspections done in the same way helps to provide that standardization. EFC has provided producers with a standard form that meets these requirements.</i></p>
2.5.1		<p>✓ Daily Inspection of Birds</p> <p><i>The farmer or designate must perform a thorough inspection of the flock once a day to assess the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Abnormal behaviour</i></li> <li>• <i>Signs of disease/illness or injury</i></li> <li>• <i>Respiratory problems</i></li> <li>• <i>Panting or huddling</i></li> <li>• <i>Lameness</i></li> <li>• <i>Body condition</i></li> <li>• <i>Signs of feather pecking or cannibalism</i></li> <li>• <i>Trapped birds</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The farmer must also perform a quicker secondary walk-through inspection of the flock to assess the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Overall appearance of birds</i></li> <li>• <i>Dead birds</i></li> <li>• <i>Trapped birds</i></li> <li>• <i>Injured birds</i></li> <li>• <i>Feeders and drinkers</i></li> <li>• <i>Laying facility temperature</i></li> </ul>
2.5.2		✓ Weekly Full Inspection Checklist
2.5.3		✓ Monthly Inspection Form
2.5.5		<p>✓ Suffering, sick birds</p> <p><i>Any suffering, sick birds must be identified and appropriate action must be taken by properly trained personnel. Manager and/or employee(s) must know how to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>Check for any suffering or sick birds</i></li> <li>✓ <i>What they do with the bird</i></li> <li>✓ <i>Steps to fix the problem</i></li> </ul>

Ref	Element	Element
2.6	GE	<p><b>Barn Environment</b></p> <p><i>Layers and pullets should be protected against drafts and cold areas. The ventilation system should be kept in good mechanical order so it operates according to the specifications of the particular model. The mixing of incoming air with the warmer air in the building should occur above the birds to ensure distribution of fresh warm air into each area of the barn. Strategically placed minimum/maximum thermometers in the barn will assist in the monitoring of the effectiveness of the ventilation. Temperature fluctuations greater than 3°C can be stressful, may enhance respiratory problems, and will certainly affect productivity. Fresh air should be provided and water vapour should be removed by means of efficient air exchange. Ammonia concentrations greater than 25 ppm are not acceptable for human and bird health.</i></p>
2.6.1		✓ Barn temperature is maintained relatively steady between 10 – 27°C
2.6.2		<p>✓ Ammonia concentrations are less than 25 ppm</p> <p><i>Producer must have monthly ammonia test records. Exceptions are made if producers have an egg production unit with a manure belt system where manure is removed a minimum of once a week. Producers are not required to conduct monthly ammonia tests if the producer has 2 years of records from previous flocks to support monthly (October to March inclusively) ammonia testing at acceptable levels.</i></p>



Ref	Element	Element
2.7	GE	<p><b>Emergency Preparedness</b></p> <p><i>All electrically dependant mechanical systems necessary for bird health and well-being must continue to operate during a power failure or disaster.</i></p>
2.7.1		<p>✓ A stand-by generator in good working order with an alarm system must be installed or available, or an emergency plan in the event of a fire, natural disaster <b>OR</b> a power outage emergency plan has been prepared and all attendants are familiar with it.</p> <p><i>An emergency plan should include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ <i>who is in charge of the emergency plan application</i></li> <li>✓ <i>name of the farm that the plan is written for</i></li> <li>✓ <i>when and how is the plan validated</i></li> <li>✓ <i>list of contact names and phone numbers</i></li> <li>✓ <i>pager system type</i></li> <li>✓ <i>alarm system – ringer</i></li> <li>✓ <i>back-up contact names and phone numbers</i></li> <li>✓ <i>arrangements with who, regarding the rental of equipment (i.e.: generator, fans, or other equipment)</i></li> <li>✓ <i>how the ventilation, feeding and watering systems are managed in short and long term interruptions</i></li> </ul>



#### 4.2.2 Bird Handling

Ref	Element	Element
<b>3.1</b>	<b>GE</b>	<p><b>Beak Treatment</b></p> <p><i>Outbreaks of feather pecking and/or cannibalism may occur among layers or older pullets in any type of housing system. This represents a significant welfare and production problem. Beak treatment reduces injuries and deaths resulting from such outbreaks. Beak treatment should be carried out only by highly competent, trained individuals and should ideally take place prior to 10 days of age. Any treatments after this time must be documented with a reason.</i></p>
3.1.1		✓ Written Beak treatment policy is available
3.1.2		✓ Records are available that outlines the method used, age of birds at treatment, and that treatment is performed by trained personnel.
3.1.3		✓ An acceptable method of treatment is used (infrared or hot blade)
3.1.4		✗ Any treatment done after 10 days has been documented with a reason
<b>3.2</b>	<b>CCE</b>	<p><b>Handling, Catching and Loading</b></p> <p><i>This is a highly visible and vulnerable area where animal welfare can be compromised. Developing a set of guidelines and having documentation around the catching and loading process ensures potential welfare issues are identified.</i></p>
3.2.1		✓ A copy of the handling, catching and loading guidelines is available
3.2.2		✓ All farm employees have been trained on the guidelines
3.2.3		✓ Catching crew supervisors will be provided with copies of the guidelines and each crew member must read and acknowledge they will follow the guidelines. The supervisor has written down each members name and signed off on behalf of the crew.
<b>3.3</b>	<b>GE</b>	<p><b>Moulting Policy</b></p> <p><i>Controlled moulting is not a common practice in Canada and is strongly discouraged. Scientific evidence suggests this practice is stressful for the birds and controlled moulting by methods involving feed deprivation were phased out in 2005. Birds in moult and those being prepared for moult should have access to drinking water at all times.</i></p>
3.3.1		✓ If the flock has been moulted, a method has been used that is approved and does not compromise the welfare of the bird <b>OR</b> the flock has not been moulted

### 4.2.3 Flock Care

Care of the flock is important to ensure its overall health. Several key areas fall under this category, including euthanasia, lighting, disease, and other aspects that involve the entire flock.

Ref	Element	Element
4.1	CCE	<p><b>Euthanasia</b></p> <p><i>By documenting methods used, ensuring trained personnel, and following well recognized, approved methods, the producer can ensure that birds are euthanized appropriately when it is necessary.</i></p> <p><i>You must have a written record of an on-farm flock depopulation plan that includes what acceptable method(s) are used (AVMA or provincial/territorial/municipal) and the process used for flock depopulation which includes:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Procedure</i></li> <li>• <i>Method used</i></li> <li>• <i>Service provider (if used)</i></li> <li>• <i>Time from beginning to end</i></li> <li>• <i>Number of birds</i></li> </ul>
4.1.1		✓ Farm has a written plan for individual euthanasia of birds with acceptable methods described
4.1.2		✓ Farm has a written plan for end-of-lay hens that will include at a minimum:
4.1.2.1		✓ Acceptable method(s) used and a description of the process, service provider and details of method
4.1.2.2		✓ If on-farm whole flock depopulation, must describe the methods to be used, and who is responsible and trained to perform.
4.2	GE	<b>Feed Withdrawal</b>
4.2.1		✓ Prior to conveyance, processor feed withdrawal recommendations times for spent fowl have been provided and followed <b>OR</b> the birds have been disposed of on-farm.
4.4	GE	<b>Lighting</b>
		<i>Light intensity should provide adequate illumination for normal feed and water intake and normal activity. Dimmers may be used to reduce light when the attendant is not present and to increase light to facilitate observation of the birds and equipment.</i>
4.4.1		✓ Lighting allows inspection of all birds

#### 4.2.4 Hen Care

*Hens must be provided with a wholesome diet free from hunger, thirst, and malnutrition by providing ready access to fresh water and a diet that maintains full health and promotes a positive state of wellbeing. Feed and water must be distributed in such a way that the hens can eat and drink without undue competition.*

Ref	Element	Element
5.1	GE	<p><b>Feed Requirements</b></p> <p><i>In normal circumstances, all layers and pullets should have access to feed at all times. Feeding systems should provide uniform feed to all birds. Proper feed depths must be maintained to assure that all nutrients are consumed and the buildup of mouldy feed is prevented. Feeding equipment should be maintained, kept in good working order and cleaned regularly. Producers should record feed consumption of birds daily as increases or decreases in consumption can be an early indicator of problems.</i></p>
5.1.1		✓ Feeder space allows all birds equal access to feed daily
5.1.1.1		✓ 7 cm (2.8 in)
5.1.1.2		✗ Less than 7 cm (2.8 in)
<b>5.2</b>	<b>GE</b>	<p><b>Water Requirements</b></p> <p><i>All birds must have continuous access to an adequate supply of clean, fresh drinking water at all times. Water consumption should be recorded daily and can be easily monitored by the installation of a water meter. Producers should check water equipment daily to make sure it is functioning properly.</i></p>
5.2.1		Each bird has access to either:
5.2.1.1		✓ Trough waterers in good condition <b>OR</b>
5.2.1.2		✓ At least 2 nipples or cups of water <b>OR</b>
5.2.1.3		✓ At least 1 nipple or cup with water consumption records <b>OR</b>
5.2.1.4		✓ At least 1 nipple or cup with NO water consumption records

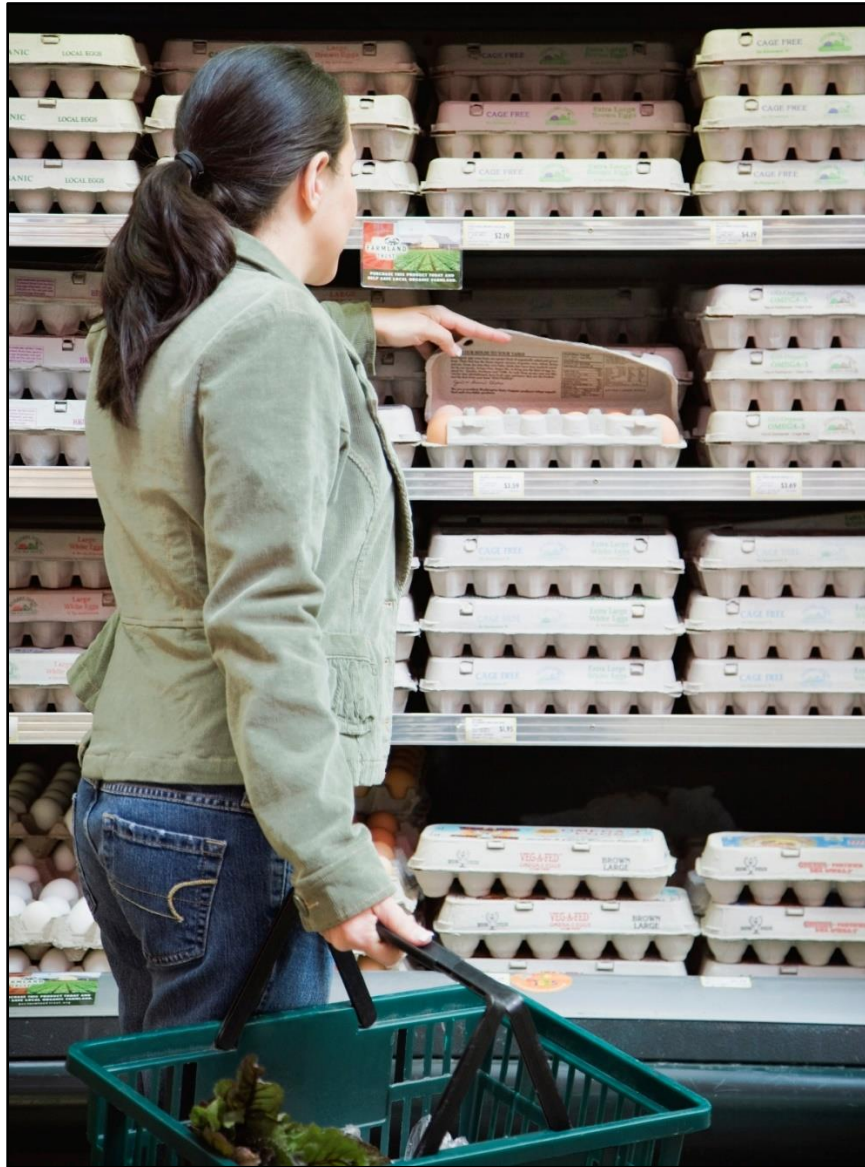


#### 4.2.5 Welfare Indicators

*There are several indicators of welfare that can be used to assess direct welfare of the birds. Feather cover and condition is one method to identify the welfare status of the bird.*

Ref	Element	Element
6.1	GE	Feather Condition
6.1.1		✓ Birds are reasonably feathered and clean (free from manure)
6.1.1.1		✓ Birds are reasonably feathered AND/OR
6.1.1.2		✓ Birds are reasonably clean
6.1.1.3		✗ Birds are poorly feathered and/or unclean





## *5.0 National Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens*

*This section includes a copy of the updated National Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens revised March 2017.*



## Appendix 1. List of Acronyms

**ACP** - Animal Care Program

**BCEMB** – BC Egg Marketing Board

**BCEPA** – BC Egg Producers' Association

**BCSPCA** – BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

**CAR** – Corrective action request

**CFIA** – Canadian Food Inspection Agency

**EFC** – Egg Farmers of Canada

**NC** - Non-conformance

**NFACC** – National Farm Animal Care Council (they prepare the national codes of practice)

**OFI** - Opportunity for Improvement

**PID** – Premises identification

**ppm** – parts per million

**SE** - *Salmonella enteritidis*

**SOP** - Standard operating procedures

