



Qualitätssicherung. **Vom Landwirt bis zur Ladentheke.**



QS requirements "beyond the law"

The requirements in the QS scheme can exceed the legal requirements. This applies particularly to processes that have a critical influence on food safety or animal welfare. Individual measures "beyond the law" are listed in this document.

However, it is important to note first of all that **quality assurance** based on one another - **from farm to shop** - is characteristic of QS. The binding product and process requirements apply to all scheme participants at home and abroad.

Ensuring process quality, independent controls, comprehensive monitoring, and consistent traceability...

... are the core elements of the QS scheme for safe food products founded in 2001.

The companies that have decided to participate in the QS scheme are audited at regular intervals. By signing the scheme contract, the participants undertake to observe the requirements defined in the QS scheme for production and marketing. At the same time, they submit to **independent inspection** by independent, accredited certification bodies (ISO/IEC 17065) and recognized, accredited laboratories (ISO/IEC 17025).

Process control in the QS scheme is supplemented by product controls in the scheme's own **monitoring programs**. In the meat and meat products supply chain, companies are obliged to participate in feed and salmonella monitoring as well as antibiotics monitoring. In the supply chain of fruit, vegetables and potatoes they participate in the QS residue monitoring.

All scheme participants must ensure **traceability** at all times. The compilation of information on the purchase of goods must be guaranteed within four hours.

„Beyond the law“ QS requirements in detail

Feed industry

Comprehensive feed monitoring

- In feed monitoring, all feed material are regularly tested for certain pollutants (e.g. mycotoxins, heavy metals and dioxins). The test results must be stored in the QS database. If it is necessary to react quickly to special risks, **ad hoc monitoring plans** are drawn up (currently valid: Additional control plan for aflatoxin in maize products).
- For single harmful parameters, QS goes well beyond the legal requirements with **stricter limit values**. For example, the maximum values in QS feed monitoring for aflatoxin are below the legal limits (e.g. mixed feed for dairy cattle: legal maximum content 0.005 mg/kg, QS guideline value 0.001 mg/kg). QS also has guideline values for the mycotoxins



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DON, ZEA and aflatoxin for products of the sugar processing industry (sugar beet pulp).
There are currently no legal requirements in this area.

- Manufacturers and distributors of the following end products must undergo a release verification before placing them on the market:
 - Fatty acids from chemical refining
 - Fatty acid distillates from physical refining
 - Salts of fatty acids
 - Mono- and diglycerides of fatty acids
 - Fish oil
 - raw coconut oil and raw cocoa butter
 - Mixed fats and oils from manufacturers who process fatty acids and mixed fatty acids

Positive list for feed material

- Exclusive use of raw material according to the **positive list for feed material** or lists of QS agreements.
- In addition, an **exclusion list** contains substances that may not be used as animal feed in the QS scheme.

Documentation of VVVO numbers

- The VVVO number is documented for **traceability** in the case of deliveries of compound feed (loose goods) to farmers.

Cleaning specifications for the transport of feed

- Requirements for the **cleaning** and **disinfection** of trucks used to transport animal feed.

Agriculture

Antibiotics and salmonella monitoring.

- All **pig farmers, cattle farmers and poultry farms** are obliged to participate in the **antibiotics monitoring**. In cooperation with the coordinator and the farm veterinarian, all antibiotics are recorded individually for each farm. The obligation generally applies to all livestock owners in the QS scheme (legislation: reporting obligation only for 250 fattening pigs, 250 rearing piglets, 10,000 broilers, 1,000 turkeys or 25 calves; no reporting obligation for sow farmers).



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- **Pig fattening farms** must participate in **salmonella monitoring**. This obligation applies to all farms (legislation: only farms with at least 100 sold fattening pigs per year).
- **Poultry farms** must participate in **salmonella monitoring**. Each fattening period must be bacteriologically sampled for salmonella.

Stock care by veterinarian

- Each livestock owner (pig, cow and poultry) must regulate the **stock care** with a veterinarian. The care relation is agreed upon by a written veterinary care contract; the conversion of the stock care is to be documented.

Health of footpad in poultry

- **Turkey and broiler farmers** must implement measures to improve footpad health in their stables (quality of bedding) and provide evidence of annual training.

Animal Health Index (TGI) for slaughter pigs

- Animal health indices are calculated quarterly for pig production farms. On the basis of the slaughter results, indices are calculated for each individual farm for the following groups of findings: respiratory health, organ health, limb health and carcass intactness. They enable pig farmers to make a compact assessment of the slaughter results and to compare them directly with other farms that have delivered to the same abattoir. The animal health indices are based on the results of the official ante- and post-mortem inspection, in each case for slaughtering in the last six months.

Residue testing for fattening calves

- Calf farmers undergo a residue control programme for beta-agonists, artificial and natural hormones and other critical substances (e.g. chloramphenicol).

Crisis management agriculture

- An emergency plan to ensure the supply of the animals (in the event of the absence of the farm manager or power failure) is compulsory.

Sty floor

- With a view to optimal animal housing and cleanliness, all housing facilities (in particular the floor of the house) must be designed in such a way that the animals do not come into more than unavoidable contact with faeces and urine. A dry lying area must be available for them (legislation: only required for pigs).
- Specialized calf fattening farms must keep fattening calves in bays, the floors of which are equipped with an elastic padding in the feeding and resting areas. This applies to new buildings as well as to the renewal of floors in existing buildings (after the deadline of 1 January 2020).



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Space allowances

- In cattle farming, a minimum floor area is prescribed: over 400 kg live weight, at least 2.2 m² must be available per animal (legislation: requirements only for calves up to 6 months).

Water supply

- In cattle sty, the water supply is defined: if tethered, a self-drinker must be available at each place. In group housing, a drinking trough to animal space ratio of no more than 1:15 is required for bowl drinkers (recommended 1:10); if trough drinkers are used, the troughs must be at least 6 cm wide per animal

Slaughtering/Deboning and Processing

Criteria for the slaughter of young boars

- Farms which slaughter non-castrated male pigs (young boars or young boars treated with a vaccination against boar odour) or which cannot rule this out in the future must implement procedures which ensure reliable detection of odour-causing carcasses.

Appointment of an animal welfare officer

- All slaughter companies must appoint an **animal welfare officer** who monitors compliance with animal welfare regulations (legislation: appointment only for slaughter volumes of 1,000 livestock units per year or more).

Exclusion of risk material

- The **brain and spinal cord** of bovine animals and the spinal cord of pigs may not be marketed or processed under the QS scheme. The same applies to all types of mechanically **separated meat**. In addition, QS products must be free of foreign proteins that are suitable for increasing the BEFFE value.

Annual training courses in line with the Infection Protection Act

- The scheme participants in the meat industry and in the food retail must provide proof of **annual training** of employees in accordance with the Infection Protection Act (legislation: training only every two years).

Diagnostic data

- The slaughterhouse must process the result of the **pregnancy finding** and communicate it to the **holding of origin** in such a way that the latter can easily recognise the delivery of a pregnant bovine animal in the last third of the pregnancy and thus signal a possible need for action.



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- The **diagnostic data** from **pig slaughtering** are evaluated in a **central database**. For this purpose, data on respiratory health, organ health, limb health and intactness are compared. The technical possibilities must be created to record all data according to the guideline.
- The **diagnostic data** from **poultry slaughter** are recorded and evaluated in a **central database**. For this purpose, data on mortality in the flock, mortality during transport and changes in the ball of the foot are compared.

Microbiology

- **Listeria spp.** must be taken into account in microbiological tests to monitor the success of cleaning and disinfection.

Food retail meat and meat products

Product temperature

- Mandatory minimum temperature for fresh meat: not below -2 °C for all types of meat

Supply Chain fruit, vegetables and potatoes

Avoidance of residues/non-approved substances

- Producers, wholesalers, processors and food retailers are obliged to participate in **residue monitoring**. In accordance with a risk-oriented control plan, the products are tested for maximum residue levels, post-harvest treatment agents, growth regulators, pollutants and heavy metals as well as active substances exclusively permitted for cultivation.
- QS goes beyond the legal requirements when evaluating **non-approved active substances** for the respective culture. If the active ingredient content is above a value of 0.015 mg/kg, the producer is blocked for the QS scheme for the corresponding product.
- When pesticides are used, for example, **compliance with the waiting period** and documentation of the active substance or beneficial insect used are mandatory.
- Following a complaint, the producers concerned have an obligation to obtain individual advice

Prevention of microbiological contamination/hygiene

- The use of **organic fertilizers** may only take place under consideration of specified requirements, e.g. specifications on permitted ingredients for fermentation substrates. For the use of **manure of animal origin**, there are special requirements for application and deadlines.



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- The **use of water** for irrigation and other water use before harvesting is only permitted after risk analysis and proven water quality (E.coli < 1000 kbE/100 ml).
- The scheme participants in processing and the food retail must provide proof of **annual training** of employees in accordance with the **Infection Protection Act** (legislation: training only every two years).
- **Toilets for harvesters** must be accessible on foot or by means of transport provided within a reasonable time. The number of toilets depends on the number of harvesters and the duration of the harvest work. Disposable towels are obligatory for drying hands.

Traceability

- It is compulsory to indicate the identification number of the producer on the label or delivery note.

Soil requirements/fertilisation

- For the purpose of risk minimization, information on previous crops, soil condition (soil analysis), use of plant protection products, fertilizers or the application of sewage sludge must be demonstrated **for all areas** for the purpose of risk minimization.
- When growing fruit and vegetables under glass, the **nitrogen fertilizer** strategy must be explained.

Microbiological testing

- Processed fruit and vegetables and potatoes must be checked for the following **parameters**:
 - Fruit and vegetables: EHEC (VTEC, STEC), yeasts
 - Fruit: Enterobacteriaceae, coagulase-positive staphylococci