

# Canadian Organic Standards

## Assessing Improvements to Farm Animal Welfare: A Comparison of 2015 (amended 2018) and 2020 Standards for Livestock Production Changes highlighted in blue

### Summary of key changes:

- Routine dehorning is no longer permitted. It can now only be performed if it's the only remaining option, and if pain control is used.
- A detailed plan to prevent and minimize parasite problems is required.
- Outdoor exercise areas and pasture must be constructed and managed to encourage use and prevent animal discomfort.
- If an animal has to be confined, farmers must document ways to reduce confinement in the future.
- Space requirements specific to dairy cattle and beef cattle defined.
- Space requirements for sheep and goats increased.
- Tie-stalls must be phased-out of dairy cattle production by December 2030.
- Electric trainers are prohibited.
- Outdoor areas for poultry must have overhead shade and protection from predators distributed throughout the range.
- Barn-raised laying hens must have access to an enriched verandah whenever they can't go outside (bad weather, risk of disease).
- Perches for laying hens must be designed to satisfy their natural perching behaviours.
- Outdoor exercise areas for pigs must have shaded/sheltered areas.
- If outdoor exercise areas for pigs are made only of concrete, they must have access to a bedded area.

Canadian Organic Standards 2015 (CAN/CGSB-32.310 – 2015)	Canadian Organic Standards 2020 (CAN/CGSB-32.10 – 2020)
<b>6.4 Livestock feed</b>	
<p>No specifics on alternatives to use if removal of beef calves, lambs and kids is necessary to prevent the spread of a contagious disease.</p> <p>No specifics on withholding period for calves fed milk from an organic cow that received antibiotic treatment.</p>	<p><b>6.4.3</b> Specific livestock rations shall take the following into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>c)</b> when removal of beef calves, lambs and kids from their mother is necessary to prevent the spread of a contagious disease, the use of non-organic milk or non-organic milk replacer is permitted as part of a veterinary-approved plan of disease eradication if organic alternatives are commercially unavailable. The veterinary-approved plan of eradication shall include a timeline and preventative measures such as testing milk, blood or manure, or pasteurizing milk. In order of preference, the following can be used (provided it is free of medication): organic milk (including pasteurized), organic milk replacer, non-organic milk, or non-organic milk replacer;</li> <li><b>e)</b> calves can be fed milk from an organic cow that received treatment with antibiotics if a withholding period of twice the label requirement or 14 days, whichever is longer, is applied;</li> </ul>
<p>No reference to Code of Practice for water testing.</p>	<p><b>6.4.5</b> Livestock of all ages shall have access to clean, fresh water on demand. Livestock water sources shall be tested according to livestock drinking water quality guidelines and procedures outlined in the relevant Code of Practice (see 2.4) and quality assurance programs mandated by industry associations.</p>
<p>Non-organic feed may be used for a maximum of ten consecutive days as a result of a catastrophic event.</p>	<p><b>6.4.7</b> By exception, non-organic feed is permitted under the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> If organic feed is unobtainable as the result of a catastrophic event with a direct impact on the production unit (for example, fire, flood, or extraordinary weather conditions), non-organic feed may be used for a maximum of ten consecutive days (or up to 30% non-organic feed for up to 30 consecutive days), to ensure a balanced livestock ration. Non-organic feed from land in transition to organic production and free of prohibited substances shall be used in preference to non-organic feed;</li> </ul>

<p>No documentation or confirmation of regional forage shortage required.</p> <p>In the event of a regional shortage, forage from land in transition to organic production and free of prohibited substances shall be used in preference to non-organic forage.</p> <p>No specifics on contingency plan to address future forage shortages.</p>	<p><b>b)</b> Breeding herds may be given non-organic forage in the event of a regional forage shortage <b>documented by the operator and confirmed by a regional authority</b>, when possible, provided that the animals are segregated, are visually distinguishable (for example, have ear tags and age verification records) and record keeping is maintained. For breeding herds, forage from land in transition to organic production and free of prohibited substances shall be used in preference to non-organic forage. Use of genetically engineered forage crops is prohibited at all times. In all other respects, breeding herds whose offspring is intended for organic products shall be under organic management at all times. The breeding herd shall be re-transitioned when an organic forage supply becomes available. Subclause 6.2.3 applies to any offspring. The organic status of other livestock on the operation is not affected;</p> <p><b>c)</b> In the event of a forage shortage <b>documented by the operator and confirmed by a regional authority</b>, when possible, and if the quantities of feeds allowed in 6.4.7 b) are insufficient, non-organic forage may comprise up to 25% of the forage ration for the entire ruminant herd with the following in order of priority preference:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1)</b> non-organic forage from land in transition;</li> <li><b>2)</b> non-organic forage grown without the use of prohibited substances;</li> <li><b>3)</b> non-organic forage grown without the use of prohibited substances for at least 60 days prior to harvest;</li> <li><b>4)</b> non-organic forage provided it is not a genetically engineered crop.</li> </ol> <p><b>d)</b> The operator shall design a contingency plan to address future forage shortages which may include strategies such as growing more climate-adapted varieties; improving grazing practices; stockpiling a supply of forage; identifying alternative supply chains; varying herd size; and improving the resilience on-farm forage production.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> for the exception in 6.4.7 a), the certification body should be notified as soon as possible after non-organic feed or forage is used. For the exceptions in 6.4.7 b) and c), the certification body should be notified before non-organic feed or forage is used.</p>
<p><b>6.6 Livestock health care</b></p>	
<p>Dehorning permitted.</p> <p>No mention of consulting the Code of Practice for debudding/disbudding.</p>	<p><b>6.6.4</b> Physical alterations are prohibited, unless they are essential for animal health, welfare or hygiene, for identification or for safety reasons.</p> <p><b>b)</b> If they are the only remaining option, the following physical alterations are permitted; restrictions in 6.6.4 c) apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>4)</b> <b>Dehorning</b></li> </ol> <p><b>c)</b> Restrictions on physical alterations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3)</b> For castration, tail docking, dehorning, <b>debudding/disbudding</b> or branding, operators shall consult the applicable Code of Practice (see 2.4) and follow the requirements for age restrictions and methods and the use of pain control medications;</li> </ol>
<p>If permitted products are ineffective in combatting illness or injury, prescribed veterinary drugs not listed in this standard may be used to treat meat animals (restrictions apply).</p> <p>Only specifies antibiotic treatment for dairy animals with chronic conditions.</p>	<p><b>6.6.10</b> The use of veterinary medicinal substances shall comply with the following:</p> <p><b>c)</b> If the products permitted by 6.6.10 a) and b) are ineffective in combating illness or injury, prescribed veterinary drugs not listed in this standard or in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 may be administered to <b>breeding stock, layers or dairy animals</b> with written authorization by a veterinarian. <b>Some restrictions apply (see 6.6.2, 6.6.11 d) and 6.6.12). With the exception of parasiticides administered according to 6.6.11, meat from animals treated with veterinary pharmaceutical drugs not listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 shall not be organic.</b></p> <p><b>e)</b> <b>Animals that require the use of antibiotics or other substances restricted in 1.5 e) for the same disease for three consecutive years shall be removed from the herd within nine months following the last course of treatment.</b></p>
<p>No mention of genetic selection, assessments of tissue at slaughter, hygienic cleaning and disinfection methods for barns, or down time in parasite control plan.</p>	<p><b>6.6.11</b> Organic livestock operations shall have a comprehensive plan to minimize parasite problems. The plan shall include preventative measures, such as <b>genetic selection</b>, pasture management, fecal monitoring and <b>assessments of tissue at slaughter</b>, and emergency measures in the event of a parasite outbreak. <b>Hygienic cleaning and disinfection methods for barns, such as power washing, steam washing, floor burning and lime washing, shall be included in the plan as well as down time (i.e., when the barn is vacant).</b> By way of an exception, if preventative measures fail due to, for example, climatic conditions or other uncontrollable factors, the operator may use parasiticides that are not listed in Table 5.3 of CAN/CGSB-32.311, provided that:</p>

<p>No mention of provisions to avoid developing parasite resistance.</p> <p>No specifics on a group of animals/entire production unit being treated in consecutive years for the same problem.</p> <p>Dam can be treated during gestation.</p> <p>No specifics on dairy cull animals for meat, or swine breeding stock.</p> <p>Laying hens lose organic status after more than one treatment in a 12-month period.</p>	<p>a) observations of the animal, fecal test results, or assessments of tissue as appropriate for the species indicate that livestock is infected with parasites;</p> <p>c) the operator has written instructions from a veterinarian indicating the product and method to be used, including provisions to avoid developing parasite resistance, such as rotation of parasiticides;</p> <p>If these conditions are met, the following restrictions apply:</p> <p>e) the exception cannot be granted for a group of animals or an entire production unit for more than two years in a row for the same problem;</p> <p>f) a dam from any species may receive only one treatment of parasiticides during gestation;</p> <p>j) dairy cull animals that receive antibiotics shall never be considered organic for meat;</p> <p>k) swine breeding stock animals that present with a high parasite load may receive up to three parasiticide treatments in a year as part of a parasite reduction plan. This exception cannot be applied systematically [refer to 6.6.11 b) and e)];</p> <p>l) laying hens that receive more than two parasiticide treatments in a 12-month period shall lose their organic status. Treatment of the flock, rather than individual hens, is permitted.</p>
<p><b>6.7 Livestock living conditions</b></p>	
<p>No mention of non-agricultural absorbent bedding sources.</p> <p>No mention of animal discomfort in things to avoid when managing outdoor areas.</p>	<p><b>6.7.1</b> The operator shall establish and maintain animal living conditions that accommodate the health and natural behaviour of animals, including:</p> <p>g) appropriate resting and bedded areas that meet the needs of the animal. Indoor areas shall be large enough, solidly built, comfortable, clean and dry. Resting areas shall be covered with a thick layer of dry bedding that absorbs excrement. If organic bedding is commercially unavailable, bedding material from non-genetically engineered sources that is free of prohibited substances for at least 60 days prior to harvest may be used. Non-agricultural absorbent bedding sources (for example, minerals, cellulose, sawdust, and wood shavings) can be used for livestock bedding as long as they meet the requirements in 1.4 and 1.5, and do not contain, or have not been treated with, prohibited substances;</p> <p>j) construction and management of outdoor exercise areas and pasture to encourage appropriate use by livestock to prevent animal discomfort, and to avoid soil degradation, long-term damage to vegetation and the contamination of water.</p>
<p>Documenting measures taken to reduce the need to restrict outdoor access in the future not required.</p>	<p><b>6.7.2</b> Access to the outdoors and freedom of movement may be restricted for the following reasons, provided that confinement is temporary:</p> <p>a) inclement weather;</p> <p>b) conditions in which livestock health or safety is jeopardized, given the stage of production; and</p> <p>c) conditions in which soil, water or plant quality would be compromised.</p> <p>The operator shall document the reasons for, and duration of, confinement. Measures taken to reduce the need to restrict outdoor access in the future shall also be documented when circumstances are within the operator's control.</p>
<p>No mention of what to do if the appropriate cleaners and disinfectants listed in the standards are not effective.</p>	<p><b>6.7.4</b> Housing, pens, runs, equipment and utensils shall be cleaned and disinfected to prevent cross infection and build-up of disease-carrying organisms. Appropriate cleaners and disinfectants listed in Tables 5.3, 7.3 and 7.4 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 shall be used. If these substances are not effective, other cleaners and disinfectants are permitted on the recommendation of a veterinarian and with confirmation of a disease issue. In the event of a reportable disease, any effective disinfectant may be used to clean housing, pens and runs. Such uses shall be documented. For equipment that comes into contact with food products, the requirements in 8.2 apply, and substances listed in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 of CAN/CGSB-32.311 are permitted.</p>
<p>No specifics for barns or shelters.</p>	<p><b>6.7.7</b> For new installations or replacement purposes, wood for livestock barns and shelters treated with prohibited substances is allowed if livestock or feed does not come in contact with the wood. For existing barns and shelters, operators shall take measures to</p>

prevent contact, such as applying a barrier or establishing a buffer zone. If major renovation of barns on existing operations is required in order to comply, operators are granted an extension until December 2023. For fence posts, see 5.2.3.

**6.11 Additional requirements for cattle, sheep and goats**

No specific space requirement defined for free-stall dairy cattle.

Not specified if indoor space requirements apply only to bedded area.

No reference to what breed of dairy cattle space requirements are based on.

Adult beef cows provided 6 m<sup>2</sup> (65 ft<sup>2</sup>)/head of indoor space.

No specific space requirement defined for beef cattle in the finishing phase, or beef cattle maternity pens.

Space requirements not specific to age/stage of production.

**6.11.2** Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for cattle are shown in Table 1: Dairy and Table 2: Beef below.

**Table 1 – Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for dairy cattle**

Cattle	Indoor space	Outdoor runs and pens
<b>Free stall</b>	Ratio of cows to stalls shall not exceed 1:1	No minimum area required
<b>Bedded pack barn</b>	11 m <sup>2</sup> (118 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head (of bedded area)	No minimum area required
<b>Individual maternity pens</b> NOTE 1 maternity pen per 35 cows is recommended	15 m <sup>2</sup> (161 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head (of bedded area)	Not applicable
<b>Group maternity pens</b>	11 m <sup>2</sup> (118 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head (of bedded area)	Not applicable
<b>Calves and young cattle</b>	2.5 m <sup>2</sup> (27 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for young calves; increasing to 5 m <sup>2</sup> (54 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for growing steers and heifers (12 months old)	5 m <sup>2</sup> (54 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head to 9 m <sup>2</sup> (97 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head, depending on the size of animals
<b>Tie stalls</b> (see 6.12.1)	Stall size appropriate for size of cow	6.5 m <sup>2</sup> (70 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head in spring and fall when not on pasture

**NOTE** Table 1 reflects the space requirements for Holstein cattle; with justification, space requirements may be reduced for small breeds of cattle.

**Table 2 – Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for beef cattle**

Cattle	Indoor space (when provided)	Outdoor runs and pens
<b>Adult beef cows</b>	5.6 m <sup>2</sup> (60 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for 500 kg (1,102 lb) cows increasing to 7.25 m <sup>2</sup> (78 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for 900 kg (1,984 lb) cows (of bedded area)	9 m <sup>2</sup> (97 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>Cattle finishing phase</b>	Indoor confinement is prohibited in the grazing season Space requirements as per calves and young cattle below	23 m <sup>2</sup> (247.5 ft <sup>2</sup> )/animal for 363 kg (800 lb) finishers and increase to 46.5 m <sup>2</sup> (500 ft <sup>2</sup> )/animal for 545 kg (1,200 lb) finishers
<b>Calves and young cattle</b>	2.5 m <sup>2</sup> (27 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for young calves; increasing to 5 m <sup>2</sup> (54 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for growing steers and heifers (12 months old) (of bedded area)	5 m <sup>2</sup> (54 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head to 9 m <sup>2</sup> (97 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head depending on the size of the animals
<b>Maternity pens</b> NOTE 1 maternity pen per 20 cows is recommended	13.4 m <sup>2</sup> (144 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head (of bedded area)	

**6.11.3** Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for sheep and goats are shown in Table 3.

**Table 3 – Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for sheep and goats**

	Indoor space	Outdoor runs and pens
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Indoor space requirement for sheep and goats: 1.5 m <sup>2</sup> (16 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head plus 0.35 m <sup>2</sup> (3.8 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for each additional lamb/kid.  Outdoor space requirement for sheep and goats: 2.5 m <sup>2</sup> (27 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head plus 0.5 m <sup>2</sup> (5.4 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for each additional lamb/kid.	<b>Ewes/does and nursing lamb/kid</b>	2 m <sup>2</sup> (21.5 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head plus 0.35 m <sup>2</sup> (3.8 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for each lamb/kid	3 m <sup>2</sup> (32.3 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head plus 0.5 m <sup>2</sup> (5.4 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head for each lamb/kid
	<b>Bottle-fed, weaned, and feeder lambs/kids</b>	0.5 m <sup>2</sup> (5.4 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head increasing to 1.5 m <sup>2</sup> (16 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head by one year of age	0.75 m <sup>2</sup> (8.1 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head increasing to 2.25 m <sup>2</sup> (24 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head by one year of age
	<b>Rams/bucks over one year of age</b>	3 m <sup>2</sup> (32.3 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	4.5 m <sup>2</sup> (48.5 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
If construction of new infrastructure is required in order to comply with 6.11.3, operators are granted an exemption that permits the use of existing infrastructure until December 2025, provided that a plan for the new construction or renovation is in place by December 2023.			
<b>6.12 Additional requirements for dairy cattle housing</b>			
Tie stalls prohibited in new construction and major renovations.	<b>6.12.1</b> Tie stalls in existing dairy barns may be used for lactating dairy cows, and for a period of one month for the training of heifers raised in loose housing. Tie stalls are prohibited in new construction and major renovations. All use of tie stalls will be phased out of organic dairy production by December 2030. By December 2020, if tie stalls are used, dairy cows shall have an exercise period at least twice a week, preferably every day.		
Electric trainers permitted on existing tie-stall operations and prohibited in new constructions or major barn renovations. Electric trainers must be discontinued after November 2020.	<b>6.12.3</b> Electric trainers are prohibited. The tails of cows in stalls may be tied to prevent the tail from lying in the gutter, provided that the tying allows for natural behaviour, free movement of the tail and quick release when necessary.		
<b>6.13 Additional requirements for poultry</b>			
No specifics on outdoor protection from predators.	<b>6.13.1</b> The operator shall establish and maintain poultry living conditions that accommodate the health and natural behaviour of poultry as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>b)</b> Poultry shall be reared in open-range conditions and have free access to pasture, open-air runs, and other exercise areas, subject to weather and ground conditions. Outdoor areas shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>3)</b> have effective overhead cover (for shade and protection from avian predators) distributed throughout the range area of barn-raised birds to encourage continual use by the birds. The cover may be natural (such as trees, shrubs and crops) or artificial (such as shade cloth, camouflage netting, screens or trailers). Roof overhangs over pasture may account for up to 50% of the required overhead cover if they are functional (i.e., they provide shade and protection from avian predators). By December 2023, operators shall submit a plan to ensure that this overhead cover shall represent at least 10% of the minimum required range area (as outlined in Table 5 of 6.13.13) by December 2025;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
No requirement for an enriched verandah.	<b>6.13.3</b> Enriched verandahs for barn-raised layers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>a)</b> Enriched verandahs shall be used when barn-raised layers do not have access to outdoor runs because of weather or disease constraints.</li> <li><b>b)</b> An enriched verandah is a covered, uninsulated, unheated extension to a poultry barn. Birds shall have access to the enriched verandah year-round during daylight hours, at least from spring through fall. The enriched verandah shall: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1)</b> have an outdoor climate but offer protection from inclement weather (e.g., wind, rain), rodents, predators and disease threats;</li> <li><b>2)</b> represent at least 1/3 of the footprint of the indoor barn area;</li> <li><b>3)</b> have natural lighting which may be supplemented with artificial lighting;</li> <li><b>4)</b> have a sand floor, a dirt floor or a solid floor covered with bedding, such as straw or wood shavings, for comfort and warmth and to encourage foraging, scratching and dust-bathing behaviours;</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		

	<p>5) offer enrichments (examples include perches, trays of greens, hay bales, pecking objects) to encourage natural behaviours; and</p> <p>6) not count towards indoor or outdoor space allowance</p> <p>c) Enriched verandahs shall be provided in new construction for barn-raised layers. They shall be added to existing infrastructure when the operator cannot demonstrate that at least 25% of layers utilize the outdoor range when there are no weather or disease constraints.</p> <p>d) All existing enriched verandahs shall be accepted as they are as of December 2020; they are exempt from 6.13.3 b 2) and 6.13.3 b 6).</p> <p>e) If the operator can demonstrate that the addition of an enriched verandah of the size specified in 6.13.3 b) is not possible for an existing barn due to lack of space or because of design limitations of the existing barn:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) a smaller enriched verandah shall be allowed provided it is as close in size as possible to the requirement of 1/3 of the footprint of the indoor barn area; or</li> <li>2) the enriched verandah shall be constructed in the uncovered outdoor area and, as an exception, may count as part of the outdoor space allowance; or</li> <li>3) operators are granted an exemption that permits the use of existing infrastructure until December 2030, provided that a plan for the new construction or renovation is in place by December 2025.</li> </ol>
<p>Perch area of at least 18 cm (7 in.)/hen must be provided for layers. Perch area may include raised perches, nest rails and raised floors.</p>	<p><b>6.13.5</b> Perches shall meet the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) In the first weeks of life, layer chicks shall have continuous access to perch space</li> <li>b) During the pullet rearing phase, adequate perch space shall be appropriate for the final production system and accessible at all times and at varying heights.</li> <li>c) Laying hens shall have a minimum of 15 cm (5.9 in.) perch space per hen, accessible at all times and at varying heights</li> <li>d) Perches for laying hens shall be purpose-designed, such as alighting (landing) rails in aviaries, which allow birds to wrap their toes around the rail. Feed and water trough edges, slatted floors and ladder rungs are not considered purpose-designed perching objects, but may be used to provide additional perch space beyond what is required in 6.13.5 a), b) and c).</li> <li>e) Perches shall be a minimum diameter or width of 1.9 cm (0.75 in.).</li> <li>f) Other poultry are exempt from 6.13.5 a), b), c), d) and e).</li> </ol> <p><b>NOTE</b> Producers are advised to review <i>the Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Pullets and Laying Hens</i> (see 2.4) to ensure they meet additional perch requirements for both pullets and adult layers contained therein.</p>
<p>No specifics on increasing use of pastures and outdoor exercise areas.</p>	<p><b>6.13.6</b> General requirements for meat chickens and turkeys</p> <p>b) Barn-raised meat chickens shall have outdoor access on a daily basis by at least 25 days of age when there are no weather constraints. Operators shall take measures to increase use of the pastures and outside exercise areas and have a goal of a minimum of 15% of birds on range when there are no weather constraints. Operators shall document the use of the range and continue to strive to increase the number of birds on the range in future years. This will be reviewed by December 2025.</p> <p><b>NOTE</b> Potential measures for increasing the usage of pasture, outdoor range and outside exercise areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use slower-growing foraging (hardy) breeds (characterized by a growth rate of no more than 45 g/day);</li> <li>• use a ration that has been nutritionally adjusted for slower growth (i.e., lower in protein);</li> <li>• implement an older slaughter age (e.g., 60 days) provided the health of the birds can be maintained;</li> <li>• allow outdoor access before the minimum age specified;</li> <li>• provide mobile units for summer production;</li> <li>• provide effective overhead cover on pasture;</li> <li>• provide pasture enrichment (e.g., feed, water, perches, etc.);</li> <li>• improve pasture access (e.g., pophole changes, etc.); and</li> <li>• provide enriched verandahs [see descriptions in 6.13.3 b)].</li> </ul>

No requirement to document circumstances when the maximum stocking density was exceeded, or actions to take to prevent this from happening in the future.

**6.13.13** The maximum indoor and outdoor densities are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5 – Maximum indoor and outdoor densities for poultry<sup>a</sup>**

Poultry	Indoors	Outdoor runs
<b>Layers</b>	6 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )	4 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Pullets 0-8 weeks<sup>b</sup></b>	24 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )	16 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Pullets 9-18 weeks<sup>b</sup></b>	15 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )	10 birds/m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Broilers</b>	21 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (4.3 lb/ ft <sup>2</sup> )	21 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (4.3 lb/ ft <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Turkeys/large birds</b>	26 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (5.3 lb/ ft <sup>2</sup> )	17 kg/m <sup>2</sup> (3.5 lb/ ft <sup>2</sup> )

<sup>a</sup> Under exceptional circumstances, the maximum stocking density may be exceeded for individual flocks. These circumstances shall be documented and if they recur, actions shall be taken to prevent future flocks from surpassing maximum stocking density.

<sup>b</sup> Outdoor runs are not required when flocks are undergoing an immunization program

**6.15 Additional requirements for pigs and farm-raised wild boar**

No specifics on outdoor exercise area.

**6.15.2** Pigs shall have access to outdoor exercise areas with the exception of sows with nursing piglets. Outdoor access can be temporarily restricted as stated in 6.7.2.

- a) Outdoor areas may include woodlands, other natural environments, soil or concrete exercise areas. Access to pasture is recommended but not mandatory. If pasture areas are degraded and cannot be used by the pigs, other outdoor exercise areas shall be provided in order to meet the requirements for outdoor access and rooting.
- b) An outdoor exercise area may be covered as long as at least three sides of the structure are open.
- c) When outdoors in open areas (e.g., pasture), pigs shall have access to shaded/sheltered areas suitable for the whole herd so they may take cover during inclement weather.
- d) Pigs shall not be confined exclusively to concrete yards without access to an indoor or outdoor bedded area.
- e) Guidelines around management of outdoor areas (6.7.1), preventing occurrence and spread of parasites (6.6.1 c), 6.6.11) and permitting rooting for pigs (6.15.7) shall apply.

**NOTE** Pasture management practices implemented to avoid degradation and prevent parasite build-up may include:

- rotation of pastures with annual crops;
- having a paddock rotation plan depending on the season;
- leaving a paddock empty for 5 years before repopulating with growing pigs;
- keeping sows in a paddock for a maximum of 2 years before providing the paddock with a rest period

No requirement to document circumstances when the maximum stocking density was exceeded, or actions to take to prevent this from happening in the future.

**6.15.9** The minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements are shown in Table 7.

**Table 7 – Minimum indoor and outdoor space requirements for pigs and boars<sup>a</sup>**

Pigs and boars	Indoor space	Outdoor runs and pens
<b>Sow and piglets (up to 40 days old)</b>	7.5 m <sup>2</sup> (81 ft <sup>2</sup> ) for each sow and litter	Not required
<b>Growing pigs</b>		
<b>a) up to 30 kg (66 lb)</b>	0.6 m <sup>2</sup> (6.5 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	0.4 m <sup>2</sup> (4.3 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>b) 30-50 kg (66-110lb)</b>	0.8 m <sup>2</sup> (8.6 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	0.6 m <sup>2</sup> (6.5 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>c) 50-85 kg (110-187 lb)</b>	1.1 m <sup>2</sup> (12 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	0.8 m <sup>2</sup> (8.6 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>d) &gt;85 kg (187 lb)</b>	1.3 m <sup>2</sup> (14 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	1.0 m <sup>2</sup> (10.76 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>Sows in group pens</b>	3 m <sup>2</sup> (32.3 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	3 m <sup>2</sup> (32.3 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head
<b>Boars in individual pens</b>	9 m <sup>2</sup> (97 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head	9 m <sup>2</sup> (97 ft <sup>2</sup> )/head

<sup>a</sup> Under exceptional circumstances, the maximum stocking density may be exceeded for individual groups. These circumstances shall be documented and if they recur, actions shall be taken to prevent future groups from surpassing maximum stocking density.

**Additional resources**

- View the Canadian Organic Standards at:  
<https://inspection.canada.ca/organic-products/standards/eng/1300368619837/1300368673172>
- Learn more about higher-welfare food at:  
<https://spca.bc.ca/faqs/higher-welfare-food/>