

RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING DOMESTIC FOWL
(GALLUS GALLUS)

adopted by the Standing Committee on 28 November 1995 at its 30th meeting

PREAMBLE

- (1) The Standing Committee of the European Convention on the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes,
- (2) Having regard to its responsibility under Article 9 of the Convention for the elaboration and adoption of recommendations to the Parties containing detailed provisions for the implementation of the principles set out in Chapter I of the Convention based on scientific knowledge concerning the various species of animals;
- (3) Aware also of the established practice in the implementation of the principles of animal welfare set out in Articles 3 - 7 of the Convention;
- (4) Aware that the basic requirements for the health and welfare of livestock consist of good stockmanship, husbandry methods appropriate to the biological needs of the animals and suitable environmental factors, so that the conditions under which poultry are kept fulfil the needs for appropriate nutrition and methods of feeding, freedom of movement, physical comfort; the need to perform natural behaviour in connection with getting up, lying down, resting and sleeping postures, wing-flapping and flying, walking and running, perching, grooming, eating, drinking, defecating, adequate social contact, other behaviour such as dust-bathing and egg-laying; the needs for protection against adverse climatic conditions, injury, fear and distress, infestation and disease or behavioural disorder; as well as other essential requirements as may be identified by established practice or scientific knowledge;
- (5) Concerned with the possibility that the results of developments in breeding and biotechnology may further influence the welfare of poultry and aware of the need to ensure that such developments do not adversely affect their health and welfare;
- (6) Bearing in mind that it is an obligation of the Committee to reconsider any recommendation when relevant new knowledge is available and therefore wishing to encourage the continuation of research by all Parties with the object of making optimum use of new techniques to ensure that the needs of the poultry are met and hence that their health and welfare are good;
- (7) Considering that in the light of established experience and scientific knowledge about the biological needs of poultry, methods of husbandry at present in commercial use, especially battery cage systems, and some meat production systems near the end of the growing period, often fail to meet all essential needs and hence result in poor welfare;

(8) Bearing in mind that the environment and management have to fulfil the animal's biological needs rather than trying to "adapt" the animals to the environment by procedures such as mutilations;

(9) Considering therefore that strong and continuous efforts have to be made to adapt existing systems and methods and to develop new husbandry systems and methods in line with the Convention so that the needs of the animals can be met;

(10) Aware that advances in scientific knowledge and practical experience indicate that the provisions of the Recommendation of 1986 concerning poultry of the species *Gallus gallus* kept to produce eggs should be brought up to date and that provisions should be adopted for all poultry of the species *Gallus gallus*;

(11) Has decided that the Recommendation of 1986 concerning the poultry of the species *Gallus gallus* kept to produce eggs is replaced by the following Recommendation concerning poultry of the species *Gallus gallus*:

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Article 1

1. This Recommendation shall apply to poultry of the species *Gallus gallus* kept for the production of eggs or meat or for any other farming purposes.
2. Special provisions contained in the Appendices to this Recommendation constitute an integral part thereof.

BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DOMESTIC FOWL

Article 2

When considering husbandry practices the following biological characteristics of the domestic fowl (*Gallus gallus*) presented hereafter should be borne in mind:

a. The domestic fowl is descended from the red junglefowl of south-east Asia and has been domesticated for 6 000 to 8 000 years. During most of that time it has been kept for decorative or fighting purposes. During the last 1000 - 2000 years, it has been kept for meat and egg production and only in the last 40 to 50 years it has been bred intensively for production characteristics. This in combination with changes in husbandry practices has resulted in spectacular increases in meat and egg production: the wild junglefowl lays about 60 eggs per year whereas hybrids in the 90's may lay more than 300. Meat production in broiler strains has similarly increased, and the time taken to slaughter weight has decreased considerably.

However, this intensive selection of production characteristics has not been sufficiently accompanied by a parallel selection of other characteristics which would enable the health and welfare of the birds to be protected under different farming conditions. Although there is

variation between strains of domestic fowl, all retain certain biological characteristics of their wild ancestors.

Junglefowl show complex patterns of courtship, nesting, laying, incubation, brooding behaviour and defence against predators.

b. Domestic fowl are social animals which, when allowed to do so, form a cohesive social structure and communicate by means of calls, contacts and visual displays. The social structure is established by associative behaviour, social facilitation and agonistic behaviour (attack, escape, avoidance and submission) and in groups of up to about 25 birds, a ranking or "peck order" is established. In larger groups more complex interactions may occur, with the formation of sub-groups, but many individuals will be treated as conspecific strangers. The provision of a complex, enriched environment has been found to reduce the frequency of agonistic interactions in fowl populations.

c. Domestic fowl have retained the typical feeding pattern of junglefowl, which consists of pecking and ground-scratching, followed by ingestion. Although the degree to which pecking and scratching behaviours have been retained varies among strains of hybrids, they are still present and if frustrated these behaviours may be re-directed towards injury to or even cannibalism of flock-mates. The beaks of domestic fowl are richly innervated. Beak trimming (sometimes mistakenly called de-beaking) can result in the formation of neuromas. Neuromas can cause severe and prolonged pain.

d. Domestic fowl, if given the opportunity, will exhibit the same wide range of comfort and grooming activities as their junglefowl ancestors. These include preening, which involves the arrangement, cleansing and general maintenance of the health and structure of the feathers by the beak or feet; raising and ruffling the feathers; stretching the wings; and dust-bathing. The motivation to dust-bathe remains particularly strong, even in birds reared on wire floors, and is present in birds free of ectoparasites and in those from which the uropygial gland has been removed. Birds given no material in which to dust-bathe attempt to do so using feathers and it is likely that one cause of feather-pecking is a lack of material and conditions suitable for dust-bathing.

e. Domestic fowl retain many anti-predator responses such as freezing, alarm-calling, sudden attempts to move rapidly away from danger, and vigorous struggling and vocalisation if caught. Such behavioural responses may be associated with, or replaced by, emergency and physiological responses.

f. Domestic fowl have retained courtship behaviour, when both sexes are present in a flock, but many strains of hybrids show little incubation and brooding behaviour. However, all hens will show elements of normal nesting and laying behaviour: nest site examination, nest building, sitting, increased locomotion, the pre-laying call, oviposition movements, standing and cackling. The full repertoire is shown only when an adequate nest site, such as a nest box, is available, but if this is not available, the behaviours are shown in reduced form and abnormalities of behaviour, such as prolonged stereotyped pacing, can occur.

STOCKMANSHIP AND INSPECTION

Article 3

1. Any person who owns poultry, or for the time being has poultry under his or her control, and every person engaged in the keeping of poultry shall, according to their responsibilities, ensure that every reasonable step is taken to safeguard the health and welfare of the birds.
2. The poultry shall be cared for by a sufficient number of personnel with adequate knowledge of poultry and of the husbandry system used to be able to:
 - (a) recognise whether or not the birds are in good health;
 - (b) understand the significance of behavioural changes;
 - (c) appreciate the suitability of the total environment for the birds' health and welfare.
3. Birds should be caught and handled only by competent trained staff, working under the direct supervision of the stockman and in accordance with Article 17.
4. The size or density of the group should not be too large and a large group shall not be set up unless it is reasonably certain that the stockman can safeguard the welfare of the birds.

Article 4

1. In order to develop a positive relationship between man and bird, there shall be frequent, quiet but close approach from an early age such that the bird is not unduly frightened.
2. Young birds should be given appropriate experience of management practices (e.g. particular feeding and watering systems) and environmental conditions (e.g. natural light, perches, litter) to enable them to adapt to the husbandry systems which they will encounter later in life.

Article 5

Poultry bred for farming purposes shall not be used to achieve any other goal, including public spectacles or demonstrations, if such use is likely to be detrimental to their health and welfare.

Article 6

1. The flock or group shall be thoroughly inspected at least once a day, preferably more frequently, quietly and with only such disturbance as is necessary to monitor the physical condition of the animals. A source of light strong enough for each bird to be seen clearly shall be available for this purpose. Such inspections shall be made independently of any automatic surveillance equipment.
2. For thorough overall inspection of the flock or group of birds, special attention shall be paid to bodily condition, movements, respiration, condition of plumage, eyes, skin, beak, legs,

feet and claws, and where appropriate, combs and wattles; attention shall also be paid to the presence of external parasites, to the condition of droppings, to feed and water consumption, to growth and, during the egg-laying period, to egg production level. Where appropriate the birds shall be encouraged to walk. Individual examination shall be made of those birds for which the overall inspection indicates this to be necessary.

3. Mortality, culling and, if possible, morbidity levels shall be closely monitored. Autopsies should be carried out regularly. Records should be kept of all these results.

Article 7

1. At the inspection it must be borne in mind that the healthy bird has sounds and activity appropriate to its age, breed or type, clear bright eyes, good posture, vigorous movements if unduly disturbed, clean healthy skin, good plumage, well formed shanks and feet, effective walking and active feeding and drinking behaviour.

2. If the poultry are apparently not in good health, or if they are showing obvious signs of behavioural aberrations, the stockman shall take steps without delay to establish the cause and shall take appropriate remedial action. If the immediate action taken by the stockman is not effective a veterinarian must be consulted and, if necessary, expert advice must be sought on other technical factors involved. If the cause is traced to an environmental factor within the production unit which it is not essential to remedy immediately this should be corrected when the accommodation is emptied and before the next batch of poultry is put in.

3. Injured, sick or distressed animals shall be treated without delay and if necessary separated from the rest of the flock in suitable accommodation available for this purpose or killed in accordance with Article 22.

ENCLOSURES, BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT

Article 8

1. Professional advice on health and welfare aspects should be sought when new accommodation for poultry is planned or when existing accommodation is modified.

2. New methods of husbandry, equipment or accommodation for poultry should be comprehensively tested from the point of view of health and welfare and, when tests are undertaken, shall not be put into commercial use unless found to be satisfactory.

Article 9

When new accommodation for poultry is planned a suitable site should be selected taking into consideration the risks from outside environmental factors such as noise, light, vibration and atmospheric pollution and from predators. Where appropriate, advantage should be taken of natural features to provide shelter from predators and from adverse weather conditions.

Article 10

1. The design, construction and maintenance of enclosures, buildings and equipment for poultry shall be such that they:

- allow the fulfilment of essential biological needs and the maintenance of good health;
- facilitate management of the birds;
- allow for easy maintenance of good conditions of hygiene and air quality;
- provide shelter from predators and from adverse weather conditions;
- limit the risk of disease, disorders manifested by behavioural changes, traumatic injuries to the birds, injuries caused by birds to each other and, as far as possible, contamination of the birds by droppings;
- avoid sharp corners, projections and materials which may be harmful to the birds;
- allow, without difficulty, a thorough inspection of all birds.

Endeavours shall be made to provide poultry with adequate facilities to allow the expression of the different behaviours described under "Biological characteristics of the domestic fowl".

2. Buildings in which birds are confined shall be constructed and maintained in such a way as to minimize any risk of fire. Materials should be fire resistant or treated with flame retardants; all appropriate measures shall be taken to allow for immediate action in order to protect animals, e.g. installing an alarm system and elaborating an evacuation plan for the animals. Electrical equipment and wiring shall be well installed and maintained.

3. Enclosures and buildings shall be designed and maintained in such a manner as to:

- prevent the introduction of rodents, wild birds and insects;
- allow for the prevention and treatment of infestations of internal and external parasites.

4. Where poultry are housed, floors and perches shall be of a suitable design and material and not cause discomfort, distress or injury to the birds. They shall provide sufficient support, particularly for the forward facing claws of each foot; moreover, perches shall be of sufficient length to allow all birds to roost at the same time. Floors shall be kept sufficiently dry, and perches sufficiently clean.

5. Poultry shall have access to good quality substrate for dust bathing and to prevent health problems, in particular foot, leg and breast lesions. However, this does not apply to poultry which are kept in those battery cages for which provision of litter has not yet been developed.

6. Feeding and watering equipment shall be designed, constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a way that:

- it minimizes spillage or contamination of food and water;
- all birds have sufficient access to it to avoid undue competition between individuals;
- it does not cause or result in injury to birds;
- it operates in all weather conditions;
- the consumption of water and where necessary, feed, can be monitored.

MANAGEMENT

Article 11

1. When considering the establishment or replacement of a flock, the choice of the strain of bird should be made with the aim of reducing welfare and health problems.
2. Measures shall be taken to minimize aggression and stress, especially when new groups are formed, but also to ensure that stability of the group is maintained.
3. The space allowance for birds should be calculated in relation to their demands on the whole environment, their age, sex, live weight, health and their needs to show certain behaviour, taking account of the size of the group. The stocking density shall be such that it does not lead to behavioural or other disorders or injuries.
4. Birds shall be kept in such a way that they can keep themselves clean.
5. Routine or systematic use of drugs to compensate for poor hygienic conditions or management practices shall not be allowed.

Article 12

1. The accommodation should be kept so that the ambient temperature, the air velocity, the relative humidity, the dust level and other atmospheric conditions do not adversely affect the health or welfare of the birds. The stocking density of groups shall, when they are set up, be evaluated in accordance with ventilation capacities of the buildings in order to maintain adequate temperatures to prevent heat stress, in particular during hot weather. Moreover, appropriate measures, such as cooling of buildings, shall be taken when the weather is exceptionally hot.
2. The ventilation system, and facilities for storing and handling litter and manure shall be designed, maintained and managed to prevent the exposure of birds to gases such as ammonia, hydrogen sulphide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide in concentrations which cause discomfort to the birds or which are detrimental to their health.
3. Where the health and welfare of the animals depend on automatic or other mechanical systems of ventilation, an effective alarm system shall be installed and arrangements shall be made to ensure continued adequate ventilation in the event of power or equipment failure.
4. Where buildings need to be locked, arrangements shall be made to allow rapid entry in case of emergency.

Article 13

As far as practicable, the sound level shall be minimized and constant or sudden noise shall be avoided. Ventilation fans, feeding machinery or other equipment shall be constructed, placed, operated and maintained in such a way that they cause the least possible noise, both directly inside the accommodation and indirectly through the structure of the accommodation itself.

Article 14

1. All buildings shall have light levels sufficient to allow all birds to see one another and be seen clearly, to investigate their surroundings visually and to show normal levels of activity. It is therefore recommended that the minimum illumination level should be 20 lux at bird eye level, measured in 3 planes at right angles to each other. As far as practicable, natural light shall be provided. In this case, light apertures should be arranged in such a way that light is distributed evenly within the accommodation.

2. After the first days of conditioning, the lighting regime shall be such as to prevent health and behavioural problems. Therefore, it shall follow a 24 hour rhythm and include a sufficient uninterrupted dark period, as a guideline approximately a third of the day, to allow the animals to rest and to avoid problems such as immunosuppression and eye abnormalities.

3. A twilight period should be given in the dimming of lights sufficient to permit birds to settle without disturbance or injury.

Article 15

1. All birds shall have appropriate access to adequate, nutritious, balanced and hygienic feed each day and to adequate supplies of water of suitable quality at all times. In the case of birds which have difficulty in feeding or drinking, appropriate measures shall be taken in accordance with Article 7 paragraph 3.

Sudden changes in the type or quantity of feed and feeding procedures shall be avoided except in case of emergency. Methods of feeding and feed additives which cause injury or distress to the birds shall not be permitted.

2. The provisions of paragraph 1 shall not apply in the case of therapeutic or prophylactic treatment administered on the instructions of a veterinarian.

Article 16

All automatic or other mechanical equipment upon which birds depend for their health and welfare must be thoroughly checked at least once daily. Where defects are discovered these must be rectified immediately, or, if this is impracticable, other appropriate steps taken to safeguard the health and welfare of the poultry until the defect can be rectified.

Article 17

1. Birds should not be deprived of food or water before transport except in the case of transport to a slaughterhouse which is close to the point of production.

2. Every effort should be made to coordinate collection times with production requirements at the slaughterhouse, in order to limit the time birds are held in containers before transport.

3. Before de-populating houses, any hindrance from fixtures and fittings, especially sharp edges and protrusions, must be removed. The doors of battery cages shall be fully opening and as wide as possible to minimize injury to birds on handling.

Care must be taken in catching birds in order to avoid panic and subsequent injury to and smothering of the birds, for example by reducing the intensity of the light or using a blue light.

4. Particular care shall be taken when moving birds within a house to ensure that no bird is injured by the equipment or handling process. Birds should preferably not be carried hanging head downwards and in any case they shall be held by both legs. They shall be held carefully to avoid damage to their legs and care shall be taken to avoid heads and wings hitting solid objects.

Distances birds are carried shall be minimized, for example by bringing transport containers as close as possible to the birds.

5. Hens kept in battery cages are particularly susceptible to bone breakage. They shall be removed from the cage one at a time and during removal the breast shall be supported.

6. Transport containers with large openings should be used to avoid damage to the birds, and during the time the birds are held in the containers they shall be protected from bad weather and excessively hot or cold conditions.

7. Efforts should be made to encourage the development and use of improved systems for handling large numbers of poultry, with a view to overcoming the welfare problems which currently arise.

Article 18

1. Those parts of the accommodation with which the birds come into contact shall be thoroughly cleaned and, where appropriate, disinfected, every time the accommodation has been emptied and before new birds are brought in. While the accommodation is occupied by poultry, the interior surfaces and all equipment therein shall be kept satisfactorily clean.

2. Any dead bird must be removed promptly and hygienically in accordance with existing legislation.

Article 19

When there is a risk of attack by predators, measures shall be taken to minimize the risk in accordance with domestic law and other legal instruments for the protection of animals or for the conservation of threatened species.

CHANGES OF GENOTYPE OR PHENOTYPE

Article 20

1. Breeding or breeding programmes which cause or are likely to cause suffering or harm to any of the birds involved shall not be practised. In particular, birds whose genotype has been modified for production purposes shall not be kept under commercial farm conditions unless it has been demonstrated by scientific studies of animal welfare that the birds can be kept under such conditions without detriment to their health or welfare.

2. In breeding programmes, particular attention should be paid to criteria conducive to the improvement of birds' welfare and health, as well as to production criteria. Therefore, the conservation or development of breeds or strains of animals which would limit or reduce animal welfare problems connected with, for instance, aggressiveness or feather pecking should be encouraged.

Article 21

1. For the purposes of this Recommendation, "mutilation" means a procedure carried out for other than therapeutic purposes and resulting in damage to or the loss of a sensitive part of the body or the alteration of bone structure, or causing a significant amount of pain and distress.

2. The mutilation of birds shall be generally prohibited; measures shall be taken to avoid the need for such procedures by changing inappropriate environmental factors or management systems and selecting appropriate breeds and strains of bird.

If these measures are not sufficient to prevent suffering by the birds, exceptions to this prohibition may be made on a case by case basis by the competent authority only in respect of the following procedures:

- removal of the tip of the beak;
- in the case of male breeding birds, the removal, within the first 72 hours of life, of the first phalanx of the toe directed backwards and that of the inside toe;
- dubbing (removal of part of the comb) within the first 72 hours of life.

3. Notwithstanding paragraph 2, the practice of surgical castration may be tolerated where it is a long-standing tradition permitted by domestic law.

Measures shall be taken to improve the conditions under which surgical castration is currently carried out. In particular, it must be done by a trained operator, under veterinary control, using an anaesthetic according to established experience and scientific knowledge and in accordance with national legislation.

4. As long as these mutilations are carried out and since they will cause pain to the birds, efforts should be made to develop methods of anaesthesia and analgesia which reduce this pain.

5. Exceptions to the general prohibition of mutilation made in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 shall be reviewed regularly by each Party involved to determine whether or not they shall be maintained. The Standing Committee shall be informed regularly of the improvement made in this respect.

6. The use of blinkers ("spectacles") must only be allowed for a limited period on veterinary advice. Such blinkers shall not totally block the vision. Blinkers which involve the penetration or other mutilations of the nasal septum or which are likely to become entangled and cause the bird injury, the use of contact lenses and the plucking of live birds must never be allowed.

KILLING

Article 22

1. If poultry are ill or injured to such an extent that treatment is no longer feasible and transport would cause considerable additional suffering, they must be killed on the spot. This must be done without causing undue pain, agitation or other forms of distress and without delay by a person experienced in the techniques of killing except in emergency when such a person is not immediately available.

2. The methods used shall either:

- a. cause immediate loss of consciousness and death, or
- b. rapidly render the animal insensible to pain and distress, until death supervenes, or
- c. cause the death of an animal which is anaesthetized or effectively stunned .

Drowning and suffocation shall not be permitted.

Appendix III, paragraphs 2 and 3, set out methods which may be used for killing unwanted chicks and embryos in hatcheries.

3. The person responsible for the killing shall ensure that for each bird the requirements of paragraph 2 are fulfilled and that the animal is dead.

SUPPLEMENTARY PROVISION

Article 23

This Recommendation, in particular the Appendices, shall be reviewed within 5 years of coming into force, and, if appropriate, amended, in particular according to any new scientific knowledge which becomes available.

APPENDIX I *

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR LAYING HENS

A. ADDITIONAL PROVISION FOR POULTRY KEPT IN BATTERY CAGE SYSTEMS TO PRODUCE EGGS FOR CONSUMPTION

For the purpose of this Recommendation, a "battery cage system" shall mean an arrangement of cages of poultry, in one or more rows, on one level, or in tiers, located in a building. A "cage" shall mean an enclosure for one or several birds.

1. Accommodation comprising more than three tiers of cages shall be permitted only if suitable devices or measures make it possible to inspect all tiers without difficulty.
2. Irrespective of the type of cage used, all birds shall have sufficient freedom of movement to be able, without difficulty, to stand normally and turn around. They shall also have sufficient space to be able to either perch or sit down without interference from other birds. Parties undertake to review these provisions if in the light of further experience and scientific knowledge it appears desirable to do so.
3. Cages shall be of sufficient height and constructed in such a way as to allow the birds to stand normally.
4. All floors shall be designed, fitted and maintained so as to avoid distress or injury to the birds and to support adequately each of the forward facing claws of each of their feet.
5. All birds shall be able to eat at the same time.
6. All birds shall have access to at least two water nipples or drinking cups, the siting of which does not encourage aggressive behaviour, or to a water trough which must extend along the whole width of the cage.
7. Since the keeping of poultry in battery cages may, in certain cases, lead to unnecessary suffering of the birds, in the design, construction or reconstruction of poultry accommodation endeavours should be made to introduce improvements in existing husbandry systems, and to develop and apply new systems which allow for the behavioural and physiological needs of the birds to be met; in particular to develop housing systems where the birds have more space, a less barren environment and nesting and perching facilities.

* These additional provisions for laying hens have not been revised since 1986.

B. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR POULTRY KEPT IN OTHER INTENSIVE SYSTEMS TO PRODUCE EGGS FOR CONSUMPTION

For the purpose of this Recommendation, "other intensive housing systems" - not being battery cage systems - include those which consist of:

- i. deep litter (such as wood shavings, straw, sand, turf, etc.)
- ii. slatted, plastic or wire mesh floors
- iii. combinations of i and ii

with or without tiers of perches.

1. When determining the stocking rate, consideration shall be given to breed, system of housing, strain and type of bird, colony size, temperature, ventilation and lighting, as well as to the number of perches or other suitable installations available in the third dimension.

The stocking density shall be such as not to cause apparent distress or injury to the birds.

2. Adequate perching facilities without sharp edges shall be available for all hens.
3. Adequate nesting facilities shall be provided.
4. If food is not provided *ad libitum*, sufficient space must be available to allow all birds to eat at the same time.
5. Where birds feed from both sides of an undivided trough sufficient space should be provided to avoid excessive competition between the birds.

C. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR POULTRY KEPT ON FREE RANGE

1. Flocks and portable houses should be moved with sufficient regularity to avoid continuously muddy conditions and/or contamination of the land with organisms which cause or carry disease to an extent which could seriously prejudice the health of poultry.

2. Precautions should be taken to protect birds against predators, dogs and cats.

3. Shelter from rain, sun and cold should always be available when necessary. Windbreaks should be provided on exposed land.

4. When birds are transferred to range houses, precautions should be taken to avoid crowding and suffocation, particularly during the first few nights. Birds should not be confined for too long during hours of daylight or subjected to direct sunlight during confinement.

5. Food and water should never be allowed to remain in a stale or contaminated condition. In freezing conditions, particular attention should be given to the provision of water.

APPENDIX II

ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR POULTRY KEPT FOR MEAT PRODUCTION

A. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR BREEDERS

1. An adequate number of cocks should be present so as to avoid aggressive behaviour which can lead to injuries in hens or cocks.
2. The birds shall have access to litter in order to be able to peck, scratch and dust-bath.
3. The birds shall have access to perches which shall be designed and kept so as to avoid foot disorders and be of sufficient length to allow all birds to roost on them during the night.
4. An adequate number of nesting facilities of a suitable design shall be available.
5.
 - a. Provisions 2, 3 and 4 do not apply to breeders kept in cages as part of special testing programmes.
 - b. In cases other than those covered by a., where existing cages not complying with provisions 2, 3 and 4 are used for breeders, these may be allowed until they are worn out, or become otherwise useless.
 - c. Whenever possible, litter, perches and nesting facilities shall be provided.
6. To avoid conflict of motivation for the birds, the provision of food shall not coincide with the daily peak egg laying period.

Feed levels shall not be so low that birds are caused distress (see Article 15).

Breeding programmes shall be directed towards avoiding the need to severely deprive the birds of food.

7. Considering its importance for the welfare of the animals, the breeding programmes shall include among their objectives the promotion of the offspring's health by the prevention of:
 - locomotor problems;
 - feather pecking;
 - oophoritis or salpingitis;
 - aggressive behaviour.

B. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR BROILERS

1. The stocking density shall be such that all throughout the rearing of birds:

- all birds are able to reach food and water easily;
- the birds are able to exercise and perform normal patterns of behaviour (e.g. dust-bathing and wing-flapping);
- any bird wishing to move from a crowded area to a more open space is able to do so;

Moreover, the Contracting Parties should encourage research aimed at defining production conditions that are compatible with the welfare of the birds and, in particular, in order to avoid locomotory problems research should be carried out aimed at determining an optimal stocking density for broilers.

2. The birds shall have access to litter in order to be able to peck, scratch and dust-bath.

3. In intensive systems, feeders and drinkers should be arranged so that no bird has to move more than 3 m in order to feed and drink.

At high stocking densities, it is necessary to reduce this distance.

4. Considering the importance for the welfare of the animals of a normal balance between skeletal and muscular development:

- breeding programmes should include among their objectives the prevention of locomotor problems;
- management measures should prevent the occurrence of leg problems; for example a low energy diet should be given for the first three weeks of birds' lives and birds' activity should be encouraged (e.g. by regulating light, providing daylight from the first hours of life, perches, lowering stocking densities, improving air circulation).

APPENDIX III

KILLING OF UNWANTED CHICKS AND EMBRYOS IN HATCHERIES

1. Chicks which are not intended for rearing shall be killed as soon as possible and in any case before they are 72 hours old.
2. Chicks should be killed by using a mechanically operated apparatus approved for this purpose in accordance with national legislation, designed and operated in such a way as to ensure that all chicks are killed immediately even if they are handled in large numbers.
3. Gases or gas mixtures may only be used where the procedure is in accordance with Article 22 and approved under national legislation.

Measures shall be taken to ensure rapid death and to avoid suffocation under other birds by putting birds in a single layer and monitoring gas concentrations.

4. To kill any living embryos instantaneously, all hatchery waste shall be treated without delay using the mechanical apparatus mentioned above or any living embryo must be killed without delay in accordance with Article 22.