STANDARDS	RSPCA ASSURED INDOOR	RSPCA ASSURED FREE-RANGE	UK LEGAL MINIMUM	RED TRACTOR INDOOR	RED TRACTOR FREE-RANGE	SOIL ASSOCIATION ORGANIC	WELFARE IMPACT
YEAR OF PUBLICATION	2017		ON-FARM STANDARDS: 2022 CATCHING & TRANSPORT: 2017 PROCESSING (SLAUGHTER/KILING): 2023			2024	
ENVIRONMENT							
SPACE REQUIREMENTS	Maximum 25kg/m²	Maximum 25kg/m² (the legal minimum requirement for free-range production)	Not specified for indoor birds For birds labelled "free-range", "extensive indoor" or "barn-reared", maximum 25kg/m² For organic production, fixed housing, maximum 21kg/m² and 10 birds/m² For organic production, mobile housing with a floor area less than 150m², maximum 30kg/m² and 16 birds/m²	Stocking density increases with bird weight Maximum 59.1kg/m² (for 20kg birds) The maximum stocking density exceeds 25kg/m² from bird weights of 2kg	Maximum 25kg/m² (the legal minimum requirement for free-range production)	Follows minimum legal requirements related to organic production For fixed housing, maximum 21kg/m² and 10 birds/m² For mobile housing with a floor area less than 150m², maximum 30kg/m² and 16 birds/m²	Sufficient space is required to enable birds to perform a wide range of important natural behaviours. More space also allows subordinate birds to move away from aggressors more easily and enables resting birds to rest without being disturbed. This may reduce problems with aggression and harmful feather-pecking.
LITTER PROVISION	The floor of all houses must be completely covered in litter Litter must at least 5cm deep		Not specified	Flocks are provided with clean, fresh bedding to a minimum of 2cm		At least 50% of the house floor must be covered in litter No minimum litter depth requirement	Litter provides several functions for poultry. It provides a comfortable resting area, and opportunities for dustbathing, foraging and exploratory behaviours.
ENVIRONMENTAL ENRICHMENT	For every 500 birds, at least: • 1 large/2 small straw bales • 2 lengths of rope (a pecking object)		Not specified	For every 500 birds, at least: • 1 pecking object		At least 2 enrichment items for every 500 birds. Destructible enrichment must be provided, including forage Enrichment must be changed frequently to maintain interest	Turkeys are naturally inquisitive and explore their environment by pecking to investigate objects. Suitable environmental enrichment can encourage increased activity levels, reduce pecking directed towards other birds, and promote good health.
PERCHES	For every 500 birds, at least 2m of aerial perch space		No requirement	No requirement		Elevated perches or surfaces must be provided. The perch space provided must be aerial perch space	Providing perches allows birds to express their natural behaviour, allowing them to rest, preen and observe the activity of other birds below. When provided with the correct type of perch, birds will use them – especially during the night period. In the wild, turkeys roost in trees at night and for protection from predators.
LIGHTING	Light intensity at least 20 lux for at least 8 hours a day, continuously 8 hours of continuous darkness every day (except up to 3 days of age, when dark periods may be shorter and intermittent) Outside of these periods, light intensity must be at least 6 lux Natural daylight must be provided by 10 days of age. By 17 days of age, it must be provided at all times during the natural daylight period. The natural light openings (windows) in the house must correspond to at least 3% of the total floor area of the house Birds are provided with a natural or artificial dawn/dusk period		Adequate lighting must be available to enable inspection of the turkeys at any time Artificial lighting must be provided if the natural light available in a building does not meet the needs of the animals kept in it Animals must not be kept in permanent darkness, or without an appropriate period of rest from artificial lighting	Light intensity at least 10 lux for at least 7 hours a day. A lower light level may be used when bird welfare is compromised (e.g. where outbreaks of feather pecking are resulting in injuries to the birds Periods of darkness lasting at least 8 hours, with at least 4 hours of continuous darkness, every day	As for Red Tractor indoor birds (see relevant column), except the 8 hours of darkness must be continuous	Housing must permit plentiful natural light to enter 8 hours of continuous "nocturnal rest" must be given every day Birds are provided with a natural or artificial dawn/dusk period	Turkeys' eyes can be damanged by ongoing exposure to very dimly lit conditions, or prolonged lighting. They are also less active and unable to investigate their environnmet when the light intensity is kept too low. Birds can see a wider range of wavelengths than humans, including UV light. Standard artificial lights do not include these wavelengths. Providing natural daylight enables birds to use their full visual spectrum. This is thought to increase activity and enrich the birds' environment. Providing a dawn/dusk period enables birds to prepare to the change in lighting, for example, by finding a nighttime roosting position.
FREE-RANGE ACCESS	Not applicable	Access to a range area for at least 8 hours each day Overhead shade/shelter at 10m² for every 1000 turkeys. Natural cover (e.g. trees, shrubs) over at least 5% of the range Additional facilities, or designated existing natural elements, must be provided for dustbathing, perching or foraging in at least 1 area per 2000 birds and in at least 2 areas	Not required For birds labelled "free-range", there must be continuous daytime access to open air runs mainly covered in vegetation, of at least 4m² per turkey, for at least half their life For birds labelled "traditional free-range", the range must be at least 6m² per turkey, with continuous daytime access from 8 weeks of age	Not applicable	Access to a range area for at least 8 hours each day Shelter/cover provided on the range	Access to a range area of at least 10m²/bird from at least 10 weeks or over two-thirds of life, whichever is earlier Shelter/cover provided on the range Natural cover (e.g. trees, shrubs) over at least 5% of the range	A well-managed range can enhance bird welfare because the range provides an enriching environment with opportunities to excerise and express many natural behaviours. The outside area needs to be large enough to keep the ground in good condition, provide sufficient foraging opportunities, and protect animal health by limiting parasite build-up. Shade and shelter facilities are needed to protect animals from inclement weather. Turkeys are also prey animals and are wary of overhead predators. Providing shade, shelter and natural cover encourages birds to use the range.
FLOCK SIZE	Not specified		Not specified for indoor or standard free-range birds For birds labelled "traditional free-range", a maximum 2,500 turkeys per house	Not specified		Maximum 1,000 turkeys per house	Limiting the maximum flock size may help facilitate good stockmanship and flock checks, by restricting the number of birds that need to be inspected.
HUSBANDRY							
MUTILATIONS	Beak trimming at the hatchery must only be done using infrared technology on day-old turkeys, removing less than one-third of the beak. Later beak trimming can only take place in an emergency on veterinary advice Other mutilations not permitted		Beak trimming permitted De-snooding permitted under 21 days De-toeing permitted under 3 days	Mutilations must only be carried out when necessary Beak trimming at the hatchery must only be done using infrared technology on day-old turkeys. Any secondary trimming after 21 days of age must be undertaken by a vet or someone trained by a vet De-snooding and de-toeing permitted		Not permitted	Mutilations are operations performed without pain-relief, and as such likely cause pain and discomfort to birds, and may also interfere with natural behaviours. They are performed to alleviate the potential for birds to injure each other, which can also cause significant welfare problems. Mutilations, including beak trimming, are contrary to the principles of the RSPCA. However, it is accepted that, currently, in some cases, it may be necessary to beak trim to deter potential injurious pecking. For beak trimming, infrared technology is considered a higher welfare method, improving accuracy and reducing the risk of pain associated with the process.
FEED	Track feeders prohibited		Feed containing mammalian or avian derived protein not permitted Antibiotic and hormonal growth promotors not permitted. Routine use of antibiotics not permitted	Turkeys must not have to travel more than 7m anywhere in the house to reach food		Organic feed must be used. At least 20% of the feed must be grown on the farm, or other farms in the same region if this is not possible	Mammalian and avian proteins are not permitted in feed due to potential animal health risks. Antibiotic and hormonal growth promotors are not permitted due to potential animal and human health risks. Unnecessary use of antibiotics also risks increasing levels of antibiotic resistant bacteria. Track feeders pose a risk to bird welfare, as they can become trapped or injured. They can also impede bird movement.
THINNING	Not permitted		Permitted	Permitted		Not mentioned	Thinning involves removing a proportion of the birds on one or more occasions from the building at planned times to ensure the maximum stocking density is not exceeded. As such, the maximum stocking density is achieved on more than one occasion prior to depopulation. Thinning is stressful for the birds and may increase the risk of disease.
FREQUENCY OF WELFARE CHECKS BY FARMER	Three times a day		Once a day	Twice a day		Regularly	Multiple inspections of the flock helps ensure that all birds are checked. If there are any welfare issues these can be addressed quickly.
GENETICS AND BREEDING							
BREED	Not specified		Animals may only be kept for farming purposes if it can reasonably be expected, on the basis of their genetics or physical characteristics, that they can be kept without any detrimental effect on their health or welfare Turkeys labelled "free-range", "extensive indoor" or "barn-reared" must be at least 70 days of age at slaughter Turkeys labelled "traditional free-range" must be a slow-growing strain and the minimum slaughter age is: • 140 days for turkeys marketed whole for roasting • 98 days for female turkeys intended for cutting up • 126 days for male turkeys intended for cutting up	Not specified		Indigenous breeds and strains preferred. Breed must be suited to local conditions and have vitality and resistance to disease/ health problems Minimum slaughter age of 140 days for male turkeys or 100 days for female turkeys, or else the turkey breed must come from slow-growing strains where average daily liveweight gain does not exceed 55g	Selection for fast growth, weight gain, and heavy finishing weights (with particularly large breast muscle) can compromise other aspects of bird health, particularly leg health. Slower growing strains are healthier and better able to express natural behaviours and achieve good welfare.
WELFARE STANDARDS FOR BREEDING ANIMALS	Standards do not include requirements for parent flocks		General farmed animal welfare legislation applies to the parent stock (breeding turkeys) Natural or artificial breeding procedures which cause, or are likely to cause, suffering or injury to the animals concerned, must not be practised. This does not include procedures that are likely to cause minimal or momentary suffering or injury, or that might necessitate interventions which would not cause lasting injury	Standards include requirements for breeding flocks Turkeys must be sourced from Red Tractor breeding flocks		Standards apply to breeding flocks Turkeys must be sourced from organic breeding flocks if possible Turkeys from non-organic breeding flocks can be used if sourced straight after hatching, and organic turkeys are not available	Ideally, the welfare of turkey breeding flocks would also be included in welfare schemes. This can be challenging for smaller schemes, because breeding flocks may produce turkeys for a range of farms, not just those part of a particular scheme. Breeding turkeys have similar needs to turkeys reared for meat, but there are also welfare challenges associated with the breeding process. Most commercial turkeys are produced using artificial insemination, rather than through natural mating, as they are too heavy and broad-breasted to mate naturally. Specific standards need to be developed to ensure turkey welfare is maximised throughout the breeding process.
TRANSPORT							
TRANSPORT DURATION	Maximum 6 hours from start of loading to end of slaughter Maximum 4 hours from leaving farm to arriving at processing plant Maximum 10 hours feed withdrawal prior to slaughter		Food and water must be provided after 12 hours (excluding loading and unloading time) Food and water cannot be provided in poultry transport crates, so this restricts the maximum transport duration	Maximum 12 hours from start of loading to end of unloading at a processing plant Maximum 9 hours feed withdrawal prior to catching		Journey times kept to a minimum. Journeys over 8 hours from start of loading to end of unloading must be justified	Longer transport times are associated with higher mortality levels and increased stress for the birds, due to reduced comfort and increased potential for thermal stress. Long feed and water withdrawal times will cause birds to experience severe hunger and thirst. Long transport times also increase the risk of severe hunger and thirst, as food and water cannot be provided in transport crates.
SLAUGHTER/KILLING METHOD							
PRE-STUN SLAUGHTER	Animals must be stunned before bleeding		Animals must be stunned before slaughter (bleeding) unless slaughtered in accordance with a religious method	Animals must be stunned before bleeding		Animals must be stunned before bleeding	Pre-stunning ensures that an animal in unconscious and cannot feel pain before slaughter up until the point of death.
ELECTRICAL STUNNING/ KILLING	Permitted electrical stunning/killing methods: • Electrical waterbath killing (parameters intended to only stun birds not permitted) • Dry electrical stunning Inverting and shackling conscious birds only permitted for birds slaughtered on farm, where no commercially/practically viable alternative is available		Permitted electrical stunning/ killing methods: • Electrical waterbath stunning/ killing • Dry electrical stunning Electrical methods may only stun the animal- bleeding must follow to ensure death"	Permitted electrical stunning/killing methods: • Electrical waterbath stunning/killing • Dry electrical stunning Inverting and shackling conscious birds only permitted for birds weighing up to 15kg		All methods permitted by law (see relevant column) are allowed, with the exception that for waterbath stunning, frequencies greater than 800Hz must not be used	Electrical waterbath stunning used to be the conventional method of killing poultry. However, this method has many disadvantages. It requires live birds to be handled, inverted and hung into shackles while conscious, which causes stress and discomfort. It can also be difficult to ensure all birds are stunned correctly, without damaging the meat produced.
GAS KILLING	Permitted gas killing methods; Exposure to one of the following until death occurs: • carbon dioxide in two phases, from less than 33% to a higher concentration once animals have lost consciousness • carbon dioxide and inert gas mixture, maximum 30% carbon dioxide and less than 2% oxygen • inert gases, less than 2% oxygen		Permitted gas killing methods; Exposure to one of the following until death occurs: • carbon dioxide at over 40% concentration • carbon dioxide in two phases, from less than 40% to a higher concentration once animals have lost consciousness • carbon dioxide and inert gas mixture, maximum 40% carbon dioxide • inert gases	Permitted gas killing methods; Exposure to one of the following until death occurs: • carbon dioxide in two phases, from less than 33% to a higher concentration once animals have lost consciousness • carbon dioxide and inert gas mixture, maximum 30% carbon dioxide and less than 2% oxygen • inert gases, less than 2% oxygen		All methods permitted by law (see relevant column) are allowed	It is now more common to use gas killing methods. These do not require manual handling and shackling of conscious birds, which reduces stress and improves welfare at slaughter. Birds are also killed more consistently in the gas chamber. Carbon dioxide is aversive to birds. While currently uncommon, it is preferable to use inert gases such as argon and nitrogen, which are reportedly not aversive to poultry. This enables a more humane induction to unconsciousness compared to using carbon dioxide. Where carbon dioxide gas alone is being used, exposing birds to a controlled, gradually increasing concentration results in a smoother transition to unconsciousness.
AUDITING							
INSPECTION FREQUENCY	Annual audit of each farm, slaughter facility and catching/ transporters by RSPCA Assured An unannounced independent welfare audit at least once per flock		Local Authority Trading Standards enforce legislation covering farm animal health and welfare Farms can be inspected by Trading Standards and/or the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) if a complaint is received Slaughter facilities can be inspected by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) and an FSA vet is also always present on site Birds marketed using protected terms (free-range, traditional free range, barn reared, extensive indoor) are inspected by the APHA once per flock	Annual audit of each farm, slaughter facility, and catching/ transporters by a third party certification body Spot checks, potentially unannounced, carried out based on risk of non-conformance		Annual audit of each farm and slaughter facility by Soil Associaion Certification	Frequent inspections help ensure that standards are complied with. Unannounced spot-checks help ensure that standards are complied with at all times, not just when an inspection is expected. Useful approaches may be random, where sites can receive a visit at any time, or risk-based, targeting sites with a higher risk of non-compliance.
WELFARE OUTCOME MONITORING	Level of foot pad burn, breast blisters, back scratches and dirty feathers recorded for each flock and reported back to the farmer		Not required	Welfare Outcome scoring undertaken at the slaughter facility Measures that should be recorded are not specified		Not required	Welfare Outcome measures are animal-based metrics that reflect aspects of their welfare. They can include physical factors, such as the level of foot pad burn or other diseases, and behavioural factors, such as the level of aggressive behaviour seen. Welfare Outcome measures are relatively underdeveloped in turkeys compared to chickens.