



## **Animal Welfare Information**

### **Testing and licensing procedure for farm animal housing installations**

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According to the Swiss Animal Welfare Act (Article 7(2) TSchG), the placing on the market of mass-produced housing systems and installations for farm animals (referred to hereafter as 'mass-produced installations') requires a Federal licence. Installations are assessed to determine whether they meet the requirements of species-appropriate husbandry. This duty is the responsibility of the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office (FSVO), which has designated its two centres for proper housing of farm animals to test installations and to issue licences. It is unlawful to place mass-produced installations on the market if a licence application has not been submitted to one of these two centres. The content and steps of the licensing procedure are regulated by the Swiss Animal Welfare Ordinance (Articles 81-84 TSchV).

#### **Species and installations subject to the procedure**

A licence is required for mass-produced installations for cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, domestic rabbits and domestic poultry (Article 81(1) TSchV).

The following installations require approval (Article 81(2) TSchV):

- a. feeding and drinking installations: feeding troughs, mangers and racks, automatic feeders, feed fences, cup drinkers, nipple drinkers, self-drinkers, etc.
- b. floors and grid floors for defecation: floor mats (for lying areas and walkways), perforated floors such as slatted, perforated, mesh and wire floors and flooring plates in the animal area
- c. barriers and installations to control animal behaviour: neck rails, electric cow trainers and alternatives, partitions with openings between pens, boxes (lying cubicles, single boxes), stalls (feeding stalls, single stalls), barrier devices in the feeding area and partitions
- d. tethering devices for ruminants
- e. nests: individual and group nests
- f. perching facilities for poultry
- g. other installations with which animals frequently come into contact.

Housing systems must be approved as a whole, even if their individual components have already been approved (Article 81(3) TSchV).

Installations that have been tested and approved abroad and satisfy the requirements of Switzerland's animal welfare legislation are approved (Article 81(4) TSchV).

### Applying for a licence

According to Article 82(1) TSchV, those wishing to place a mass-produced installation on the market must first submit an application, with the documents required for assessment, to the relevant centre for proper farm animal housing:

#### For ruminants and pigs:

Zentrum für tiergerechte Haltung:  
Wiederkäuer und Schweine  
Agroscope  
8356 Ettenhausen, Switzerland

#### For poultry and rabbits:

Zentrum für tiergerechte Haltung:  
Geflügel und Kaninchen  
Burgerweg 22  
3052 Zollikofen, Switzerland

Applications must be submitted by completing the form "Licence application for housing systems and installations", which is appended to this document or can be downloaded from the Internet at [www.fsvo.admin.ch](http://www.fsvo.admin.ch) > Topics > Animal welfare > Animal housing installations. A separate application must be submitted for each installation. Applications must be signed and the documents required must be enclosed.

### Procedure for testing installations

The first step for all licence applications is to determine whether the installation to be tested meets the minimum requirements of Swiss animal welfare legislation. The rest of the assessment procedure differs depending on the application:

- If there is sufficient foundation, based on a literature review or experience with similar installations, to confirm that an installation is appropriate for the animals, the application is approved without further investigation.
- If necessary, onsite visits are carried out on working farms in order to assess an installation and its assembly under practical conditions. Such visits can also be conducted together with a representative of the applicant in order that critical aspects of an installation can be discussed immediately. This may result in adjustments to the design or assembly of installations and, of course, to the application itself.
- If a literature review and/or onsite visits do not permit a definitive assessment of whether an installation is appropriate for the animals, a practical test is considered. A test plan is drawn up and submitted to the applicant together with a cost estimate (Article 82(2) TSchV). The test plan lists the matters to be clarified, using which methods and within which time-frame. If the applicant gives its consent, the practical test is carried out. This is done either on test premises or in an experimental house run by one of the two centres, with the applicant being required to make the installation available for testing free of charge (Article 82(3) TSchV). In exceptional cases the practical test may last several years.

If required, the procedure can be supervised by the advisory committee on housing systems and installations, which is made up of representatives of the Federal authorities and the cantons as well as scientists and experts in animal welfare issues, animal husbandry and housing construction (Article 83(1) TSchV). The committee can comment on the applications, the results of the practical test and the conclusions (Article 83(3) TSchV).

## Licences

Different types of licence can apply in the course of the procedure for the testing and approval of installations:

- **Provisional sales licence:** If an installation and its assembly can be fully assessed only by means of an onsite visit, the applicant is granted a provisional sales licence. This allows it to install its system in a limited number of premises. The onsite visits are then carried out after an appropriate interval to allow the animals to become accustomed to the new installation.
- **Fixed-term licence:** For a long-term practical test of an installation, the applicant is granted a fixed-term licence covering the expected duration of the test. This allows it to install the system in those premises in which the practical test is to be carried out.
- **Licence:** A definitive licence is granted if the installation can be confirmed to meet the requirements of species-appropriate husbandry, whether this is based on the results of a practical test, onsite visits or experience and a literature review. A definitive licence allows the installation to be placed freely on the market.

Each type of licence may be made subject to conditions and requirements (Article 82(4) TSchV). These may restrict the use of the installation, e.g. in relation to the age, weight or use categories of the animals, or relate to certain construction features such as surface or edge finishes. The applicant must inform the animal keeper in writing of the conditions and requirements to which the approval is subject by the time of order acceptance at the latest (Article 84(1) TSchV).

If the applicant substantially alters an installation that has already been approved or is the subject of a pending application, a new, complete application must be submitted. A licence may be revoked if new findings show that the housing is not appropriate for the animals or if major deficiencies emerge in practice (Article 82(6) TSchV). The applicant may withdraw a pending application for approval. The withdrawal of the application will be confirmed in writing by the relevant centre. In this event, the housing system in question may no longer be placed on the market.

## Fees and publication

The fees for processing an application are charged in accordance with the Ordinance on the fees of the Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office. For the practical test, the applicant is sent a cost estimate and may be asked to pay an advance (Article 82(2) TSchV).

The FSVO keeps a list of applications pending and approvals granted, and the conditions and requirements to which they are subject (Article 84(2) TSchV), on the Internet at [www.fsvo.admin.ch](http://www.fsvo.admin.ch) > Topics > Animal Welfare > Animal housing installations. The FSVO may publish results of scientific studies performed during the approval procedure (Article 84(3) TSchV).

## FAQs

- *When is an installation regarded as mass-produced?* An installation is mass-produced if it is manufactured repeatedly and in essentially the same way, especially with regard to dimensions, construction, design, materials and surface finish.
- *What is meant by 'mass-produced housing system'?* Mass-produced housing systems are cages, boxes, stalls, pens and whole animal houses in which combinations of housing installations are set up repeatedly and in essentially the same arrangement.
- *If I submit a licence application for my product, how long will it be until I am allowed to sell it?* The relevant centre for proper farm animal housing will reply within three weeks, providing feedback on the assessment of the application and indicating whether the product may be sold.
- *What should I enclose with an application?* Enclosures should describe the installation as precisely as possible. Accurate dimensions, plans, construction details and information on materials to be used, etc. should therefore be enclosed, together with promotional material, photos and test reports if available. If the installation is already in use in Switzerland, a list of addresses of the animal keepers concerned should be enclosed.
- *Do I need to seek approval for an installation produced for my own use?* No, such an installation does not require approval but it must meet the requirements of Swiss animal welfare legislation.
- *Do I need to seek approval for an installation I would like to sell, if it has already been approved for another company?* If it is the same installation (same type, same intended use) from the same manufacturer, it does not need to be approved again. It may be approved again if a separate FSVO licence number is desired.
- *As the applicant, can I lodge an objection against a licensing decision taken by the FSVO?* Yes. All decisions taken in the testing and licensing procedure are communicated to the applicant in the form of an order so that an appeal can be lodged if necessary.
- *If I modify my approved installation, do I need to get it approved again?* If changes are to be made to the installation, this must be notified in writing to the relevant centre for proper farm animal housing, giving exact details of the proposed change. The installation will then be reassessed taking account of the change, and the licence will be adjusted if appropriate. If the changes are regarded as substantial, a new, complete application must be submitted.
- *Does the FSVO licence include a technical inspection of the installation?* No, the FSVO licence relates exclusively to the requirements under Swiss animal welfare legislation, i.e. it concerns whether an installation meets the requirements of species-appropriate husbandry. This applies without prejudice to any other restrictions on sale (patent law, trademark law, unfair competition, industrial safety, accident prevention, safety of electrical installations and appliances, etc.).
- *How can I contact the centres for proper farm animal housing directly?* The centres for proper farm animal housing can be contacted directly by e-mail or telephone:
  - For ruminants and pigs: [informationztht@agroscope.admin.ch](mailto:informationztht@agroscope.admin.ch), +41 (0)58 480 33 77
  - For poultry and rabbits: [infotsch@blv.admin.ch](mailto:infotsch@blv.admin.ch), +41 (0)58 460 85 15

## Statutory basis

### Animal Welfare Act (TSchG) and Animal Welfare Ordinance (TSchV)

#### **Article 7 TSchG** Reporting and licence obligations

- <sup>1</sup> The Federal Council may make certain types of animal husbandry and the keeping of certain animal species subject to the fulfilment of reporting or licence obligations.
- <sup>2</sup> The placing on the market of mass-produced housing systems and installations for farm animals requires a federal licence. The licence is only granted if the systems and installations meet the requirements of species-appropriate husbandry. The Federal Council regulates the approval procedure and determines the farm animals to which the procedure is applicable. It may allow exemptions from licence obligations for certain types of animal husbandry.
- <sup>3</sup> A licence is required for the commercial and private keeping of wild animals that pose particular challenges in terms of husbandry and care.

#### **Article 81 TSchV** Approval requirements

- <sup>1</sup> A licence as defined in Article 7 Paragraph 2 TSchG is required for mass-produced housing systems and installations for cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, domestic rabbits and domestic poultry.
- <sup>2</sup> The following installations require approval:
  - a. feeding and drinking installations;
  - b. floors and grid floors for defecation;
  - c. barriers and installations to control animal behaviour;
  - d. tethering devices;
  - e. nests;
  - f. perching facilities for poultry;
  - g. other installations with which animals frequently come into contact.
- <sup>3</sup> Housing systems shall be approved as a whole, even if their individual components have already been approved.
- <sup>4</sup> Installations and housing systems that have been tested and approved abroad and satisfy the requirements of Switzerland's animal welfare legislation are approved.

#### **Article 82 TSchV** Approval procedure

- <sup>1</sup> The manufacturer, the importer or the vendor sends the application to the FSVO with the documents required for assessment.
- <sup>2</sup> If a practical test is necessary, this is carried out by the FSVO or by another suitable institution. The applicant shares the costs. The FSVO submits a cost estimate to the applicant. It may request an advance payment.
- <sup>3</sup> The applicant shall make the housing systems and installations available free of charge for examination.
- <sup>4</sup> The FSVO grants approval. It may limit the validity of the corresponding licence in time and impose conditions and requirements.
- <sup>5</sup> The approval may include deviations from the minimum requirements listed in Annex 1, provided the housing systems and installations meet the requirements for appropriate animal husbandry.
- <sup>6</sup> A licence may be revoked if new findings show that the housing is not appropriate for the animals or if major deficiencies emerge in practice.

#### **Article 83 TSchV** Advisory committee on housing systems and installations

- <sup>1</sup> The Federal Council appoints an advisory committee. This numbers 15 members at most and is made up in particular of representatives of the federal authorities and the cantons as well as scientists and experts in animal welfare issues, animal husbandry and housing construction.
- <sup>2</sup> The Federal Council appoints the chairperson. Otherwise, the committee is self-constituting. It draws up rules of procedure. The FSVO manages the secretariat.
- <sup>3</sup> The FSVO may consult the committee on all issues relating to the approval of housing systems and installations. The committee comments on the applications and the results of practical tests presented to it by the FSVO.

#### **Article 84 TSchV** Announcement and publication

- <sup>1</sup> The manufacturer, importer or vendor shall inform the animal keeper in writing of the conditions and requirements to which the approval is subject by the time of order acceptance at the latest.
- <sup>2</sup> The FSVO keeps a list of applications pending and approvals granted and the conditions and requirements to which they are subject.
- <sup>3</sup> The FSVO may publish results of scientific studies that are performed during the approval procedure.



<b>Housing systems and installations for ruminants or pigs</b> <b>Form A</b>  <b>Licence application</b>  Article 7 Swiss Animal Welfare Act (TSchG) and Articles 81 and 82 Swiss Animal Welfare Ordinance (TSchV)	The application must be submitted with the enclosures required.  To be completed by the licensing authority: <hr/>
1. Applicant (address, person responsible, tel. no.):	2. Address of licensing authority:  Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office Zentrum für tiergerechte Haltung: Wiederkäuer und Schweine Agroscope 8356 <b>Ettenhausen</b> , Switzerland
3. Description of installation (name, model no. or serial no.):	4. Intended use (function of installation, species or breed, and age, weight or use category of the animals for which the installation is intended):
5. Technical data:  The following should be indicated on supplementary sheets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Design and accurate dimensions, especially interior dimensions (inside diameters) of cages, pens, boxes, stalls, entrances, doors, barriers;</li><li>- Dimensions of slats and slots, perforation and mesh sizes of perforated floors; wire sizes;</li><li>- Construction details, function of mobile installations;</li><li>- Materials used, surface treatment.</li></ul>	6. Further documents enclosed (tick as appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawings (plans), photos (if any) of the installation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Directions for use</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Promotional materials</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that electrical installations and appliances meet the domestic installation requirements of the Schweizerischer Elektrotechnischer Verein (SEV) (in the case of electrically operated installations)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Documents relating to industrial safety and accident prevention</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Reports concerning the installation's effects on the animal</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> List of addresses of animal keepers using the installation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/></li></ul>
7. The applicant is the <input type="checkbox"/> manufacturer <input type="checkbox"/> importer <input type="checkbox"/> seller of the installation (tick as appropriate).  Address of manufacturer if not in Switzerland:	8. The installation <input type="checkbox"/> has been commercially available in Switzerland since  <input type="checkbox"/> is not commercially available in Switzerland (tick as appropriate or supply further details)
9. Comments	10. Place and date      Signature of applicant



<b>Housing systems and Installations for poultry or rabbits</b> <b>Form A</b>  <b>Licence application</b>  Article 7 Swiss Animal Welfare Act (TSchG) and Articles 81 and 82 Swiss Animal Welfare Ordinance (TSchV)	The application must be submitted with the enclosures required.  To be completed by the licensing authority: <hr/>
1. Applicant (address, person responsible, tel. no.):	2. Address of licensing authority:  Federal Food Safety and Veterinary Office Zentrum für tiergerechte Haltung: Geflügel und Kaninchen Burgerweg 22 3052 <b>Zollikofen</b> , Switzerland
3. Description of installation (name, model no. or serial no.):	4. Intended use (function of installation, species or Breed, and age, weight or use category of the animals for which the installation is intended):
5. Technical data:  The following should be indicated on supplementary sheets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Design and accurate dimensions, especially interior dimensions (inside diameters) of cages, pens, boxes, stalls, entrances, doors, barriers;</li><li>- Dimensions of slats and slots, perforation and mesh sizes of perforated floors; wire sizes;</li><li>- Construction details, function of mobile installations;</li><li>- Materials used, surface treatment.</li></ul>	6. Further documents enclosed (tick as appropriate): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Drawings (plans), photos (if any) of the installation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Directions for use</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Promotional materials</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Evidence that electrical installations and appliances meet the domestic installation requirements of the Schweizerischer Elektrotechnischer Verein (SEV) (in the case of electrically operated installations)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Documents relating to industrial safety and accident prevention</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Reports concerning the installation's effects on the animal</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> List of addresses of animal keepers using the installation</li><li><input type="checkbox"/></li></ul>
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9. Comments	10. Place and date      Signature of applicant