

Responsible Down Standard International Working Group

Feed & Water Module

Housing, Stocking Density, and Outdoor Access

April 19, 2018

- **Agenda**

1. Introductions, Announcements, and Housekeeping
2. Updates
3. Review of Feed & Water Module
4. Housing, Stocking Density, and Outdoor Access

- **Theory of Change:**

Set a meaningful benchmark with the RDS, but we want to make sure we are also providing mechanisms to help move that benchmark. Therefore, we want to provide incentives to help people move toward that benchmark.

Feed and water Module

NUMBER	REQUIREMENT	GUIDANCE	LEVEL
F5.1	Waterfowl shall be provided with a supply of clean, fresh and safe drinking water.	<p>Water shall be provided in such a way that animals can drink without undue competition (drinking space allowance per waterfowl; sufficient number of drinking points and water flow rate).</p> <p>Feed shall be available during daylight hours, ad libitum feeding regime (feed is continuously available for the animal), feed to be provided at all times in such a way that animals can eat and drink without undue competition (sufficient feeder space allowance per waterfowl), equal spread of feeding facilities giving waterfowl enough space when eating and drinking.</p> <p>Food should be checked at least twice daily to ensure there is adequate food. Whenever possible, the use of feed from genetically modified sources should be avoided.</p> <p>Small Farmer Groups shall ensure that waterfowl have access to adequate quantities of food.</p>	MAJOR
F5.2	Waterfowl shall be provided with sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs and maintain them in good condition.	<p>Transport shall never take longer than 8 hours. Dependent on the local possibilities direct route shall be used, with no unnecessary stops to further decrease transport time.</p>	MAJOR
F5.3	A written feeding plan shall be available ensuring that the nutritional requirements of the waterfowl are being met.		RECOMMENDATION <i>Not applicable for Small Farmer Groups</i>

Most of our previous discussions have been around changing the level or wording and potentially adding in criteria that we feel are missing.

Water

NUMBER	REQUIREMENT	GUIDANCE	LEVEL
F5.1	Waterfowl shall be provided with a supply of clean, fresh and safe drinking water.	<p>Water shall be provided in such a way that animals can drink without undue competition (drinking space allowance per waterfowl; sufficient number of drinking points and water flow rate).</p> <p>Feed shall be available during daylight hours, ad libitum feeding regime (feed is continuously available for the animal), feed to be provided at all times in such a way that animals can eat and drink without undue competition (sufficient feeder space allowance per waterfowl), equal spread of feeding facilities giving waterfowl enough space when eating and drinking.</p> <p>Food should be checked at least twice daily to ensure there is adequate food. Whenever possible, the use of feed from genetically modified sources should be avoided.</p> <p>Small Farmer Groups shall ensure that waterfowl have access to adequate quantities of food.</p>	MAJOR

Suggested Changes:

1. Adding a guidance point to make sure this applies to all waterfowl even in the hospital.
2. Check on what the criteria is for the hospital.
3. Maybe we could take some kind of risk-based approach where we add an annual water test as a recommendation when the auditor observes potential contamination. Then we can look at using that to integrate into the next version of the standard.
4. Adding some language to the standard for critical issues that fall between critical major and the 60 days that is allow for the major criteria. (Water & Food)

Note: **We need to be clear about what kind of contamination we are looking at.**

If we did some kind of risk-based assessment, we could consider:

- *If the water is the same drinking water source for the animals as it is for humans.*
- *If there is an agricultural region close by.*
- *The history, if they had any problems with the water before.*

Note: **We should specify what the risk points should be.**

5. Mention potential run off near a water source under guidance.

Questions:

1. Are there any tools or methods to check the water at the farm to make sure it is drinkable?
 - a. Response: No, we check if there is water. We do not expect it to be as clean as human water. We check that it is relatively clean. If it is brown, it is clearly not good enough.
2. Is there an annual water test done in the U.S.?

3. Is the water test difficult or expensive to do?

Actionable Items:

1. We could start to gather some data on:
 - When is testing necessary
 - What is involved
 - How expensive it is
 - Who is already doing it
 - How they are getting it done

Food

NUMBER	REQUIREMENT	GUIDANCE	LEVEL
F5.2	Waterfowl shall be provided with sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs and maintain them in good condition.	Transport shall never take longer than 8 hours. Dependent on the local possibilities direct route shall be used, with no unnecessary stops to further decrease transport time.	MAJOR

Suggested Changes:

1. The maximum amount of time birds can go without being fed. (Add to guidance)

Questions:

1. Would there be a way to capture the maximum amount of time birds can go without being fed in a feeding plan?
2. Are there any guidelines for the appropriate amount of food and nutrition birds need?

Records

NUMBER	REQUIREMENT	GUIDANCE	LEVEL
F5.3	A written feeding plan shall be available ensuring that the nutritional requirements of the waterfowl are being met.		RECOMMENDATION <i>Not applicable for Small Farmer Groups</i>

Suggested Changes:

1. In the RWS [Farmer Guidebook](#) there is a questionnaire and once they complete that questionnaire they would essentially have a written feeding plan. (Translations Needed)

Questions:

1. Is there a need to move this up into a Minor requirement?
2. How many farms have a feeding plan in China?

- a. Response: White ducks do have a feeding plan but there is a literacy issue.

Housing, Stocking Density, and Outdoor Access

PRINCIPLE 6: HOUSING, STOCKING DENSITY, AND OUTDOOR ACCESS			
NUMBER	REQUIREMENT	GUIDANCE	LEVEL
F6.1	Female waterfowl that are in lay must be provided with nesting areas that provide a partially enclosed area for egg-laying and each nest area must contain friable nesting material.	Space and comfort shall be provided to waterfowl. It is recommended to have at least one nest box for every four birds.	MAJOR
F6.2	Nesting areas must be weatherproof and dry.	Nesting areas for waterfowl must be dry relative to nesting habit of the breed. Nesting areas should be dark following the natural sleeping patterns of the animals.	MINOR
F6.3	Waterfowl shall have access to housing or a shelter protecting them from extreme weather conditions.	Extreme weather conditions may include winds, sleet, heavy snows and sun in climatic regions where the welfare of the birds might negatively impacted. The roof and walls shall be in good condition and be waterproof where needed. Walls may be added only for times of extreme weather.	MINOR
F6.4	Housing shall be located away from areas of (potential) run off.	Run off: water running to housing.	MINOR <i>not applicable if F6.3 is no</i>
F6.5	Shelters and housing (incl. nesting areas) shall be well ventilated and allow fresh air to enter.	The house or shelter must be managed to eliminate ammonia and mold.	MINOR <i>not applicable if F6.3 is no</i>
F6.6	Shelters and housing shall allow natural light to enter.		MINOR
F6.7	Except for brooding under a heat lamp up to four weeks of age, a minimum of eight hours of darkness at night and eight hours of light during the day shall be provided.	<i>Small Farmer groups shall ensure that waterfowl have normal lighting patterns.</i>	MINOR
F6.8	If artificial light is used, it should be distributed evenly.	Uniform pattern of lighting.	RECOMMENDATION
F6.9	Housing and shelters shall have solid floors and an area available that provides dry footing. Dry, mold-free bedding shall be continuously available to waterfowl.	Well-drained floors. Existing mesh or slatted flooring areas may be covered to create the equivalent of a solid surface. The facility shall follow a regular cleaning schedule.	MINOR
F6.10	Waterfowl shall have sufficient space to enable them without competition to 1. move freely 2. stand 3. turn around 4. stretch their wings 5. run	Waterfowl may be temporarily held in cages for vaccinations or other justified reasons.	MAJOR
F6.11	Waterfowl shall not be kept in cages that prohibit the animals from expressing normal behavior.	Waterfowl should have sufficient area to express natural behaviors such as stretching their wings or socializing with other birds.	MAJOR
F6.12	Waterfowl shall have free outside access from six weeks of age. Temporary confinement dependent on weather conditions is permissible if the health or welfare of the birds would be otherwise compromised.	Sufficient number of exits, waterfowl shall be able to see the exits.	MINOR
F6.13	Outdoor area shall have sufficient space that is consistently dry.	The waterfowl shall not be forced to stand in water or mud.	MINOR
F6.14	Waterfowl should have access to water for behavioral needs.	The water should be deep enough to be able to swim without the feet touching the bottom of the water. Farms should ensure that ducks and geese have at least weekly access to pools.	RECOMMENDATION
F6.15	Water for behavioral needs should be kept clean and free of contamination.		RECOMMENDATION
F6.16	A plan for emergency situations (eg. fire, power or water cut off, flood, snow storm, feeding system breakdown, transport vehicle breakdown) shall be available to care for the waterfowl.	Examples: Emergency power supply source, fire plan with escape routes, fire extinguisher. A written plan is required for operations with more than five employees. For farms with five or less employees, it is sufficient for the inspector to interview the farmer.	MINOR
F6.17	Temperature shall be controlled in the housing of hatchlings.	At day one, temperature shall be at body temperature of hatchlings. After 20 days this shall be adjusted to outside temperature during daytime. <i>Small Farmer Groups shall ensure that animals are not exposed to dangerous fluctuations in temperature.</i>	MAJOR

Suggested Changes:

1. Possibly change F6.3 to a Major requirement especially if there is a derogation.
2. Add mortality rate record keeping and possibly a maximum mortality rate.
3. Change F6.12 from 6 weeks to 4 weeks.
4. F6.7 possibly change language to a minimum of 8 hours of “dim” or “reduced lighting”.

5. F6.16: Change the Emergency Plan into a Major requirement.
6. Change F6.17 concerning “outside temperature”.

Questions:

1. Concerning F6.3, are there duck farms that do not have shelter? If so, do auditors feel the animals are ok?
2. In instances where the birds do not have outdoor access what are the animal welfare risks when it comes to high ammonia levels?
 - a. Response: It can effect their eyes, lead to respiratory health issues.
 - b. Might require a derogation with extreme weather conditions.
3. F6.14 Access to water for behavioral needs has been more so in Europe than in China largely because of government restrictions in China. Are there any suggestions on potential ways we can address this issue?
 - a. Response: We would probably be more successful influencing the change outside of the standards. Maybe reach out to organizations/training and education. Try to address it outside so that we eventually can make it a part of the standard.

Actionable Items:

1. Create a questionnaire and look at all the information we may want to collect into a template.
2. Research an ideal temperature range for the animals at each age.

Reminders

- Have you signed the RDS IWG Charter?
- Do we have your permission to be publically listed?
- Any other questions or feedback: ResponsibleDown@TextileExchange.org

Thank you!