

Indicator factsheet Arrival and lairage management

Access to water and food

Comfort around resting



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Why is access to water and food important after unloading?

- Fasting before slaughter prevents pigs from vomiting during transportation and developing hypothermia and circulatory problems, but prolonged duration without food causes hunger and aggression.
- The *ad libitum* supply of clean water from appropriate facilities immediately after arrival in lairage pens is a basic requirement for housing pigs in lairage pens.
- Pigs usually recover after 2-3 h in lairage pen. The risk of aggression is increased if pigs are not fed after 3 h.



Inspection method (recommended)

- The Business Operators (BOs) or Animal welfare officers (AWOs) verify the number, functionality and suitability of drinkers and their cleanliness during his/her daily inspections before pigs are housed in lairage pens.
- The official inspector checks the accessibility and cleanliness of water points and tests flow rates in different pens/groups.
- In case of infringements, the inspector reports findings to BOs and/or AWOs.
- In cases of infringements, the inspector verifies the SOPs of the slaughterhouse and corrective actions are carried out to ensure the situation complies with legal requirements in the future.

Legal requirements



Council Regulation (EC) **No 1099/2009**: Requirements associated with access to water and food are specified in: {Chapter II, Article 3, Point 2.e}: prolonged withdrawal of feed or water.

{Annex II, Point 2.3.}: permanent access to clean water

{Annex III, Point 1.2.}: feeding after 12 h of pig's arrival.

{Annex III, Point 1.6.}: drinking water available from appropriate facilities at all times.

Note: Listed requirements are paraphrasing the literal text of the regulation and are not comprehensive. Moreover, there might be stricter national legislation in place. For a more detailed description on the specific requirements, see the "[Review on arrival and lairage management at pig slaughterhouses](#)".

Access to food

Assess the pens with the longest lairage times for pigs and check on the availability of food for the pigs in these lairage pens.

No or low risk to welfare:

Animals stay in the lairage for less than 3h in absence of food provision or more than 3 h with food present.



Moderate risk to welfare:

Animals stay in the lairage pens for more than 3 h and less than 12h and during that time no food is provided.

High risk to welfare:

Animals stay in the lairage more than 12h and no food is provided.



Access to water: Ensure that the pigs have continuous access to fresh water. Each lairage pen is inspected: Number of drinking points, their functioning, suitability and cleanliness.

Number of drinking places per pen and functioning (quantity and position)

Check national regulations for provisions on ratio of drinking points to animals. In any case queuing and/or fighting of pigs at the water source may indicate that too few drinkers are available or water flow rates are low increasing the risk of thirst.

No risk to welfare: Not queuing



High risk to welfare: Queuing



Cleanliness of drinkers

Check whether the drinkers are clean and hygienic. If there are specific concerns about the quality of water then further steps should be taken.

No risk to welfare: Clean: drinker places are clean and hygienic



High risk to welfare: Dirty



Source for the assessment method: Welfare Quality® protocol



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If you have any questions or
suggestions regarding this factsheet
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