


## Lameness

Mixing of unfamiliar animals, Climatic and resting comfort



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### What does lameness indicate?

- Lameness is shown as abnormal gait and is due to insufficient floorings.
- Around mixing, aggressive interactions on slippery floors may cause lameness. Additionally, prolonged lying duration on hard floors may lead to the establishment of pressure injuries on legs which may cause lameness. 
- Lameness may suffer from hunger and thirst, because they are not able to move normally to achieve water and food.

### Legal requirements

Council Regulation (EC) **No 2008/120**: Requirements associated with mixing and resting comfort:

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 3.}: conditions and space requirements of lying areas.

{Annex I, Chapter I, Point 5.}: conditions for flooring and prevention of injuries by flooring.

*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 "[Group housing and mixing of sows](#)".*



*Rubber mats are a suitable alternative for straw bedding to offer a comfortable lying area for pregnant sows. The prevalence of limb lesions and the risk for lameness can be reduced.*

### Inspection method (recommended)

- The farmer records **lame sows** during his/her daily inspections.
- The inspector verifies records of the farmer by comparing written/digital documentation with interventions taken by the farmer.
- Additionally, the inspector checks sows for lameness in different groups.
- The inspector reports findings to the farmer and in case of discrepancies between legal requirements and situation on farm corrective actions are taken.

Assess all pigs on individual level. Make all pigs rise - if necessary - to observe them while they are up and walking. Gait scoring should be performed on non-slippery floors.

### Score 0: No or slight lameness

Normal gait (fluid motion, even stride lengths, full weight bearing on all four limbs),

Or

Slight lameness (stiff gait, shortened stride, increased spinal segment movement).



### Score 1: Severe lameness

Minimum weight bearing on the affected limb(s), quick alternation between weight bearing and no weight bearing of affected limb(s) ("tipping"), no weight bearing on the affected limb(s).



Example videos of lame and not lame pigs.

Source scoring method and QR code: KTBL Leitfaden\*

\*Schrader, L.; Schubbert, A.; Rauterberg, S.; Czycholl, I.; Leeb, C.; Ziron, M.; Krieter, J.; Schultheiß, U.; Zapf, R. (2020): Tierschutzindikatoren: Leitfaden für die Praxis – Schwein. KTBL (Association for Technology and Structures in Agriculture), D-64289 Darmstadt, 2nd edition.

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