

AUDIT QUESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS HATCHERY AND BREEDER MANAGERS NEED TO CONSIDER



Critical questions are shaded (NA = not applicable). Place a tick as applicable.

Breeder farm questions	Yes	No	NA	Implications
Does the genetic strain have a high propensity for feather pecking and cannibalism?				Pecking characteristics of flocks are heritable. Progeny may inherit pecking tendencies from the breeder flock.
Are staff looking after breeder flocks trained in bird husbandry and do they have a good attitude toward birds?				Untrained staff can cause stress to breeder flocks which is transferred to progeny via epigenetics.
Have breeder flocks been stressed during the period when fertile eggs were collected?				Stressed breeder flock may result in stressed progeny via epigenetics.
Do breeder flocks have sharp claws?				Sharp claws can be inherited by progeny and can result in injuries to other birds, entrapment and cannibalism. Breeders are selecting for birds without sharp claws.
Is the diet optimised for breeder hens?				A poor diet for breeder hens may lead to a poor hatch and batches of chickens more prone to being pecked or cannibalised.

Hatchery questions	Yes	No	NA	Implications
Are fertile eggs set within the optimum weight range?				Hatching small fertile eggs may lead to smaller chicks being placed with larger chicks and the smaller chicks are more prone to being pecked or cannibalised.
Do you avoid hatching chicks from old breeder flocks with poor egg quality?				Eggs hatched from older breeder flocks and poor quality eggs may result in variable chick quality, with increased risk of pecking occurring.