

**European Union recommendation for
stocking density to broiler**

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Stocking density directly affects how much space the birds have to move in but also indirectly affects other factors such as the temperature, humidity, and the quality of the litter and the air. SCAHAW concluded that welfare is poorer when stocking density is high and that major welfare problems can only be avoided if the stocking density is 25 kg/m² (12.5 birds per m²) or less (SCAHA W, 2000, Sect. 7.5.6). This is considerably less than the stocking densities recommended by many European countries. For example, the UK government currently (2005) recommends 34 kg/m² and Danish legislation requires a maximum of 43 kg/m² during 2003 (to be reduced to 40 kg/m² by 2006) (Danish Ministry of Justice, 2001). However, it is estimated by the UK poultry industry that a considerable percentage of poultry farms may use a stocking density as high as 38 kg/m² and 16% use a stocking density greater than 38 kg/m² (Randall, 2005).