

Changes to the Certification Obligation for Rearing Farms

Agriculture Stage – Rearing of cattle and other ruminants for dairy and meat production

The “Ohne Gentechnik” Production and Certification Standard (the “VLOG-Standard”), Version 20.01, established a certification obligation for rearing farms, as of 01 January 2021, if their “Ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period.

Through dialogue with the dairy and meat industries, VLOG came to the conclusion that many rearing farms cannot implement a general certification obligation at the present time for various reasons. Therefore, when updating the Standard, changes to the certification obligation were developed, which will take effect on 01 January 2021.

The purpose of this letter is to provide information to the businesses affected by the change in the certification obligation at an early stage, before the official publication of Version 20.02 of the VLOG Standard on 01 September 2020, so that these businesses can make the appropriate adjustments. VLOG group organisers (e.g., dairies) are expressly asked to forward this information letter to their group members or inform their group members of the changes.

Current wording of the VLOG Standard, Version 20.01

Certification required

- As of 01 January 2021: For agricultural businesses that sell young animals/livestock to primary producers and whose “ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period (e.g. producers of calves and heifers) and that fulfil a business size of ≥ 20 livestock units.

Certification not required

- As of 01 January 2021: For agricultural businesses that sell young animals/livestock to primary producers and whose “ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period and that fulfil a business size below 20 livestock units. Document review is possible for these businesses as an alternative to an on-site audit.

New wording of the VLOG Standard, Version 20.02 – Effective as of 01 January 2021

Certification required

- For agricultural businesses that sell gestating cows¹ and/or dairy cows (as of second lactation) to primary producers (cf. Chapter E1 of the VLOG Standard) or temporarily hold VLOG animals in this category as a service to VLOG businesses and whose “ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period and that fulfil a business size of ≥ 20 livestock units.

Certification not required

- For agricultural businesses that sell gestating cows and/or dairy cows (from second lactation) to primary producers (cf. Chapter E1 of the VLOG Standard) or temporarily hold VLOG animals in this category as a service to VLOG businesses and whose “ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period and that fulfil a business size below 20 livestock units. Document review is possible for these businesses as an alternative to an on-site audit. Please contact the VLOG head office for this.
- For agricultural businesses that sell young cattle and animals in first lactation to the aforementioned primary producers or temporarily hold VLOG animals in these categories as a service to VLOG businesses and whose “ohne Gentechnik” compliant feed is to be applied to the minimum feeding conversion period.

Revisions to the Facility Description at the Agriculture Stage

The facility description at the Agriculture Stage is supplemented to add information about rearing farms (e.g., name, certification status, etc.). Rearing farms are better integrated into the VLOG system in this way.

- Note: Since this involves differences in content as well as supplements, either a new facility description must be filled out or the relevant items in the old description must be supplemented.

Outlook

VLOG is currently collecting data to obtain information regarding the rearing and purchase of cattle and other ruminants. The knowledge obtained in this way will be used to record the structures of rearing farms and identify potential risks to “Ohne Gentechnik” production.

The results will be used to discuss and make decisions regarding the necessity of a future certification and registration obligation for young cattle and cattle in first lactation. Changes to the current procedure will be published in future versions of the Standard, if necessary.

Contact VLOG:

For questions regarding the information letter, please contact qualitaet@ohnegentechnik.org.
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¹ Non-lactating cows: milk-producing animal (e.g. a dairy cow) which is not milked for the time between two lactation periods.