

**Priority question for written answer P-002185/2024
to the Commission**

Rule 144

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Subject: Bad weather provisions for free-range hens

On 17 August 2023, the Commission adopted Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2465 on EU marketing standards for eggs. Among other things, this regulation adapted the minimum requirements for systems of production for free range eggs (Article 11(3) with reference to Annex II). As a result, unlike many other EU Member States, the competent ministry in Baden-Württemberg has suspended the previously applicable ‘bad weather provisions’. These provisions made it possible to temporarily restrict hens’ access to the outdoors in the event of adverse weather conditions, in the interests of animal welfare. A failure to restrict hens in this way results in an increase in diseases among the animals, which often have to be treated with antibiotics. If farmers impose such restrictions now, the eggs may only be sold as barn eggs. In the interests of animal welfare, good professional practice and the internal market, it is important to clarify that bad weather provisions are still permissible throughout the EU.

Does Delegated Regulation (EU) 2023/2465 continue to allow for bad weather provisions?

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