

(English version)

**Priority question for written answer P-003397/25
to the Commission
Asger Christensen (Renew)
(3 September 2025)**

Subject: Interpretation of area requirements for organic poultry

According to the Commission's new interpretation of the Organic Regulation ((EU) 2018/848), an organic poultry holding may have a maximum surface area of 1 600 m² per farm, rather than per unit of production, which has previously been the understanding in a number of Member States. Producers in countries including Denmark, Italy, Austria and Germany have pointed out that this change brings no benefits for animal welfare. On the contrary, it could well spell the end for a significant proportion of the EU's professional producers of chickens for slaughter.

There are already extensive EU requirements regarding space, feeding, climate and access to open air areas, all of which actually do ensure a high level of animal welfare. An artificial cap on farm size will not improve animal welfare, but rather reduce volume, push up costs and make it more difficult for European consumers to get hold of high-welfare chicken — despite the EU having set itself a target of 25% organic production by 2030.

In the light of the foregoing:

1. Does the Commission agree that the rules should focus on specific animal welfare outcomes rather than arbitrary size restrictions?
2. Will the Commission reconsider its interpretation so that multiple production units per farm can still be permitted, provided that animal welfare requirements are met?
3. How will the Commission ensure that organic poultry producers in leading countries are not placed at a disadvantage compared with producers in Member States that have yet to invest, and that support thus continues to be provided for competitive and sustainable high-welfare production across Europe?

Submitted: 3.9.2025

**Answer given by Mr Hansen on behalf of the European Commission
(17 October 2025)**

In 2018, the European Parliament and the Council changed the rules setting the maximum size of organic fattening poultry farms ⁽¹⁾. Currently, point 1.9.4.4.(m) of Annex II Part II of Regulation (EU) 2018/848 ⁽²⁾ requires that the total usable surface area for fattening poultry in poultry houses of any production unit must not exceed 1 600 square meters. These rules apply equally across the Union.

The maximum size of organic fattening poultry farms set in the organic rules by the co-legislators not only has the purpose of contributing to the welfare of poultry but also to encouraging short distribution channels and local production in the various areas of the Union. The maximum size also reflects the principle that organic production should be based on the practice of site-adapted and land-related livestock production.

Changing the maximum size of organic fattening poultry farms would require an amendment to pertaining basic regulation.

⁽¹⁾ Article 12 of Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 on specific conditions and husbandry practices for poultry '(f) the total usable area of poultry houses for meat production on any single unit, shall not exceed 1 600 m²'; Commission Regulation (EC) No 889/2008 of 5 September 2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control, OJ L 250 18.09.2008, p.1) ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2008/889/2022-01-01>.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU) 2018/848 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2018 on organic production and labelling of organic products and repealing Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007, OJ L 150 14.6.2018, p.1.ELI: <http://data.europa.eu/eli/reg/2018/848/2024-12-01>.