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Broiler chicken welfare assessment in GLOBALGAP® certified and non-certified farms in Brazil

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Abstract

Regarding broilers, Brazil is the third largest producer and the leading chicken meat exporter in the world. Independent certifications are required by some importers in the European Union (EU) to guarantee compliance with minimum welfare requirements. Our objective was to compare broiler chicken welfare in GLOBALGAP® certified (C) and non-certified (N) intensive farms in the State of Paraná, Brazil, using the Welfare Quality® protocol. Ten farms in each group were evaluated and data were transformed using scores that ranged from 0 to 100, where 100 is the best condition. Results suggested that farms adhered to minimum welfare standards, regardless of certification and that the adoption of standards based on overseas rules may have limitations for the improvement of animal welfare. In order to further improve broiler welfare in Brazil, more rigorous standards should be developed.

Keywords: animal-based assessment, animal welfare, certification, chicken, international trade, Welfare Quality®