



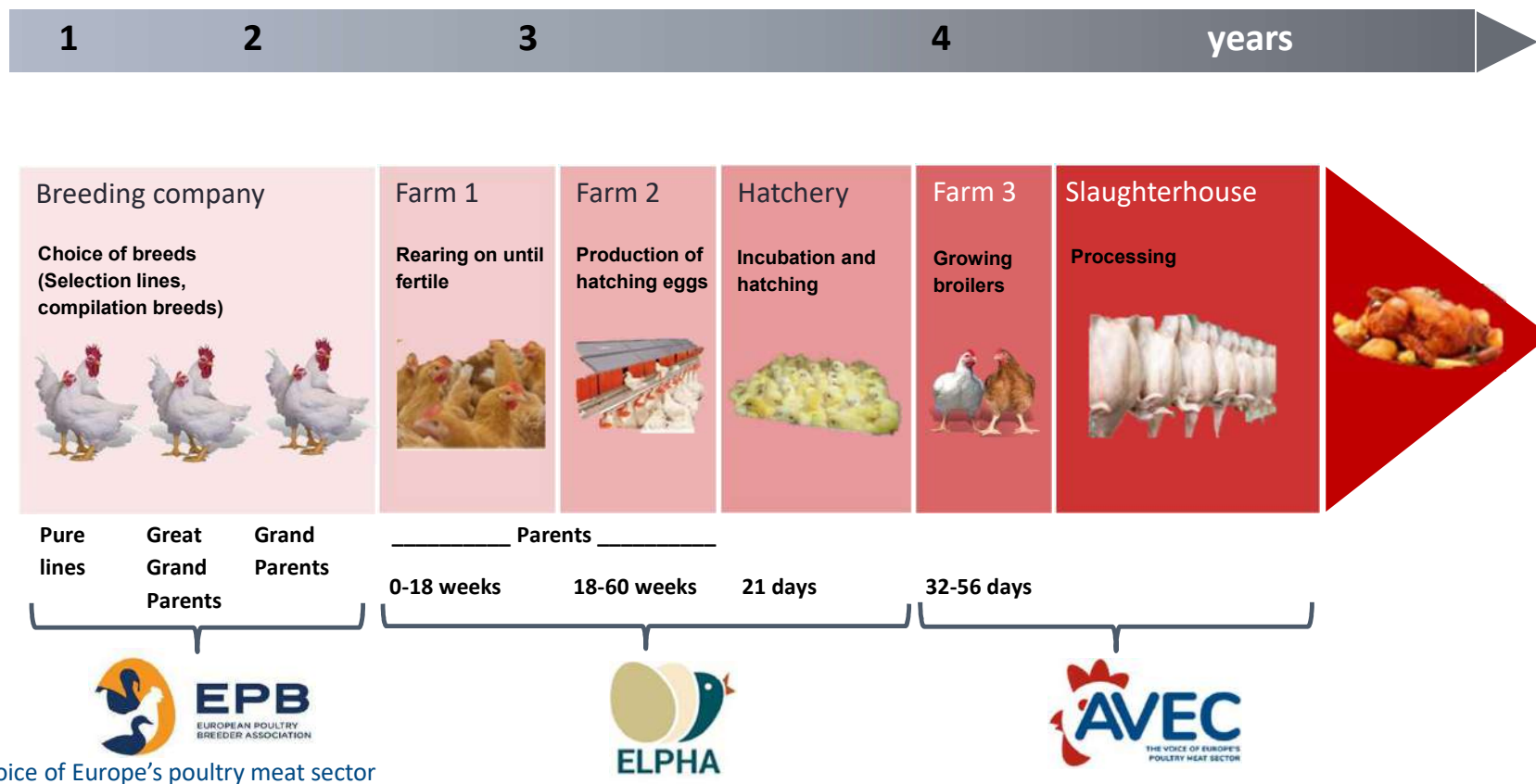
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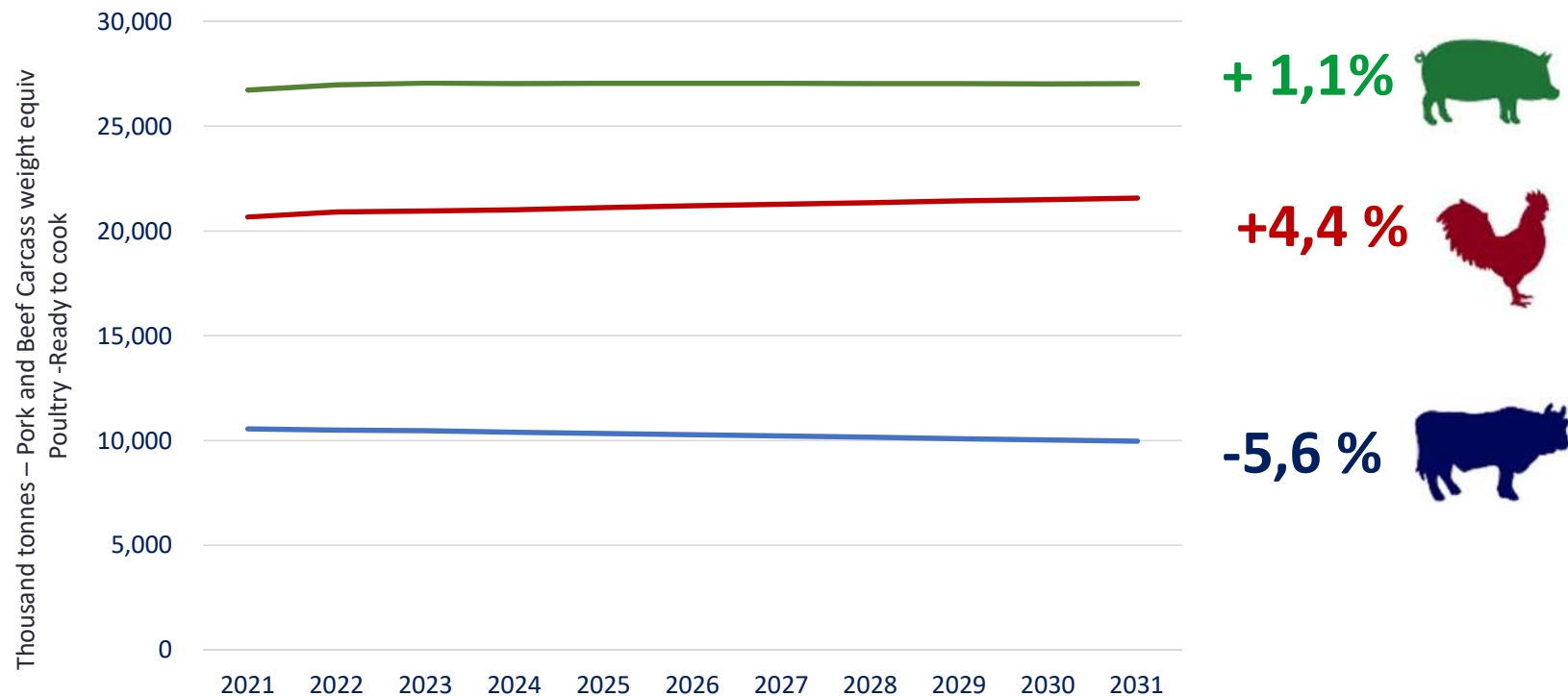
**EFSA Scientific Opinion on  
Broiler Welfare threatens EU  
Self-Sufficiency, Environmental  
& Economic Sustainability**



# Cover the whole chain from Breed to Meat



# European Meat Consumption Forecast 2021-2031





## EFSA Scientific Opinion on Broiler Welfare proposes:



### Questionable scientific approaches

The Scientific Opinion based its recommendations on **questionable scientific approaches** for foot pad health and bird behaviour.



### EU food security in danger

If the EFSA recommendations were to be made into legislation, **EU food security would be in danger**, moving from self-sufficiency to relying on 70% imports with lower welfare standards



### Increased economic segregation

Only wealthy consumers will be able to afford the healthy protein from chicken meat, leading to **widespread economic segregation**



The EU broiler sector is keen to work with EFSA on detailed monitoring and benchmarking systems to **ensure continued welfare progress**.

## EFSA Recommendation 11kg/m<sup>2</sup> stocking density



### Data presented in EFSA report

Data includes observations of birds less than 26 days of age to show a negative relationship between % birds walking and stocking density.

**Not a normal age that birds are grown to**  
= not scientifically useful.



If using the same data, but for **a typical age broilers are grown to**, there is a **slightly positive** relationship between % birds walking and stocking density.



## EFSA Recommendation 11kg/m<sup>2</sup> stocking density



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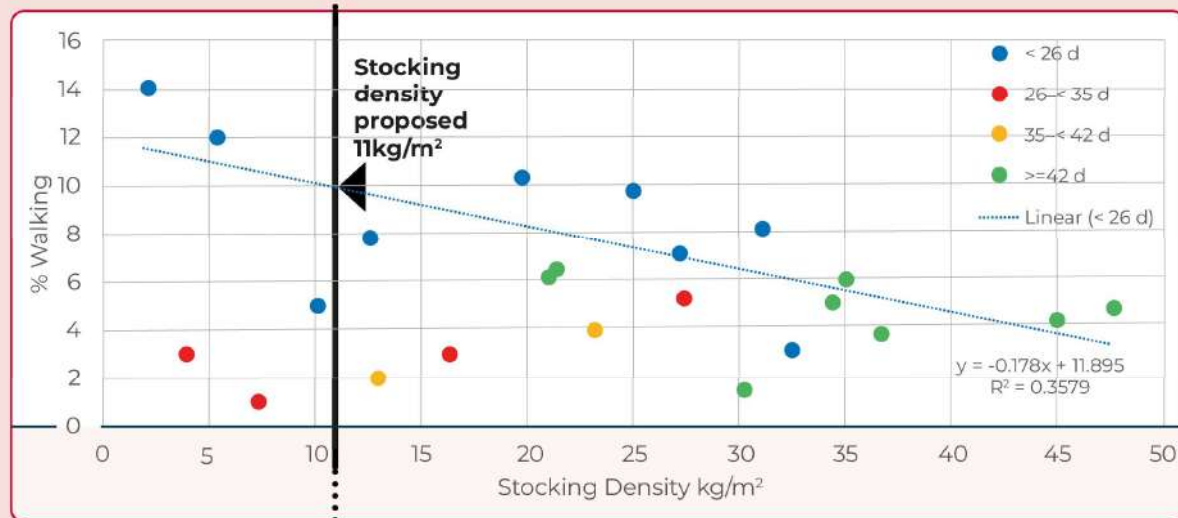
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**Not a normal age that birds are grown to = not scientifically useful.**

# VS

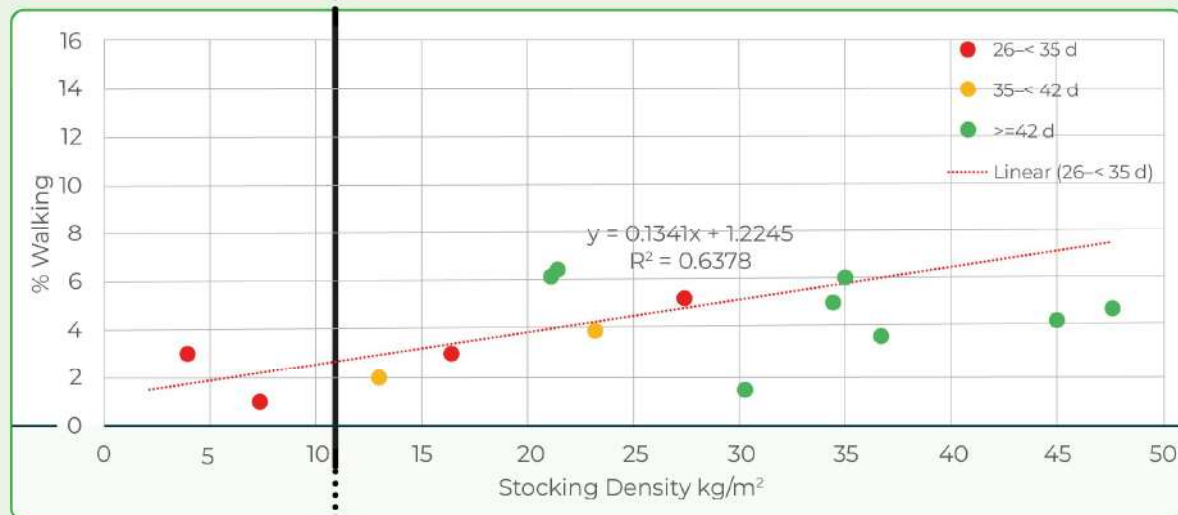


If using the same data, but for **a typical age broilers are grown to**, there is a **slightly positive** relationship between % birds walking and stocking density.



### Note:

Recommendation is for a stocking density to processing age. Typical processing ages in EU are **35-42 days**.



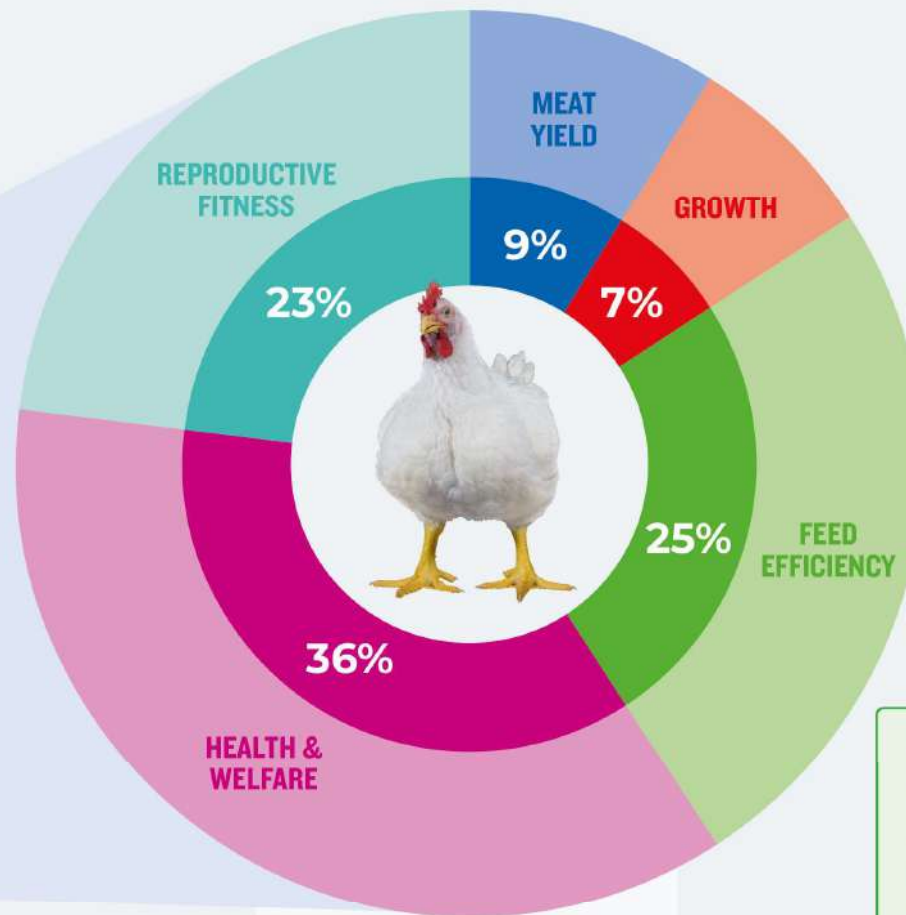


# Balanced broiler selection

Modern broilers are already selected for **welfare** & **health**

## MAIN SELECTION PRIORITIES

- ✓ 1. Health and Welfare
- ✓ 2. Feed Efficiency
- ✓ 3. Breeder Performance



**Example**  
Ross 308  
The Standard Breed in EU



Selected for more than **40 characteristics**



**Continuous increase** in health, welfare and support characteristics over last 20 years and ongoing



# Delivered Breeding Improvements

over last 20 years

The modern broiler is...

- ✓ **more efficient**  
than 20 years ago

while...

- ✓ **improving** liveability
- ✓ **improving** health
- ✓ **improving** welfare

at the same time



## IMPROVED FEED EFFICIENCY

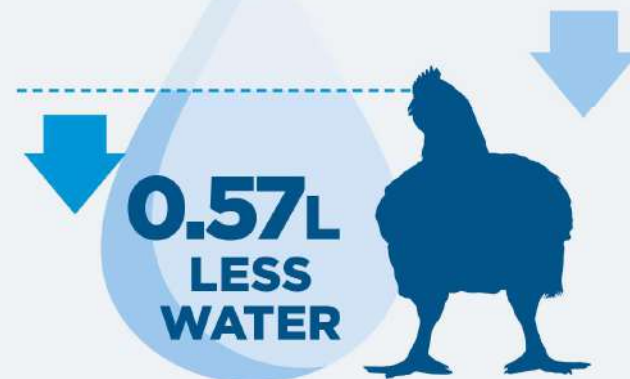
= a 2.5 kg broiler **now** consumes...



### LESS FEED MEANS...



## WATER USAGE



required **per 1.0kg broiler**

### BETTER WATER INTAKE =

- ✓ **Better** gut health
- ✓ **Better** litter quality
- ✓ **Better** footpad health
- ✓ **More efficient/sustainable**  
water use

## Delivered **Sustainability Improvements** over last 20 years



### REDUCED GLOBAL WARMING POTENTIAL

**Improved feed efficiency**  
and shorter grow-out time =

**19%  
LESS  
GREENHOUSE  
GASES  
PRODUCED**

### REDUCED POLLUTION POTENTIAL

Better feed efficiency =  
**Better nutrient utilization**

**28%  
LESS  
NITRATE/  
PHOSPHATE  
EXCRETION**

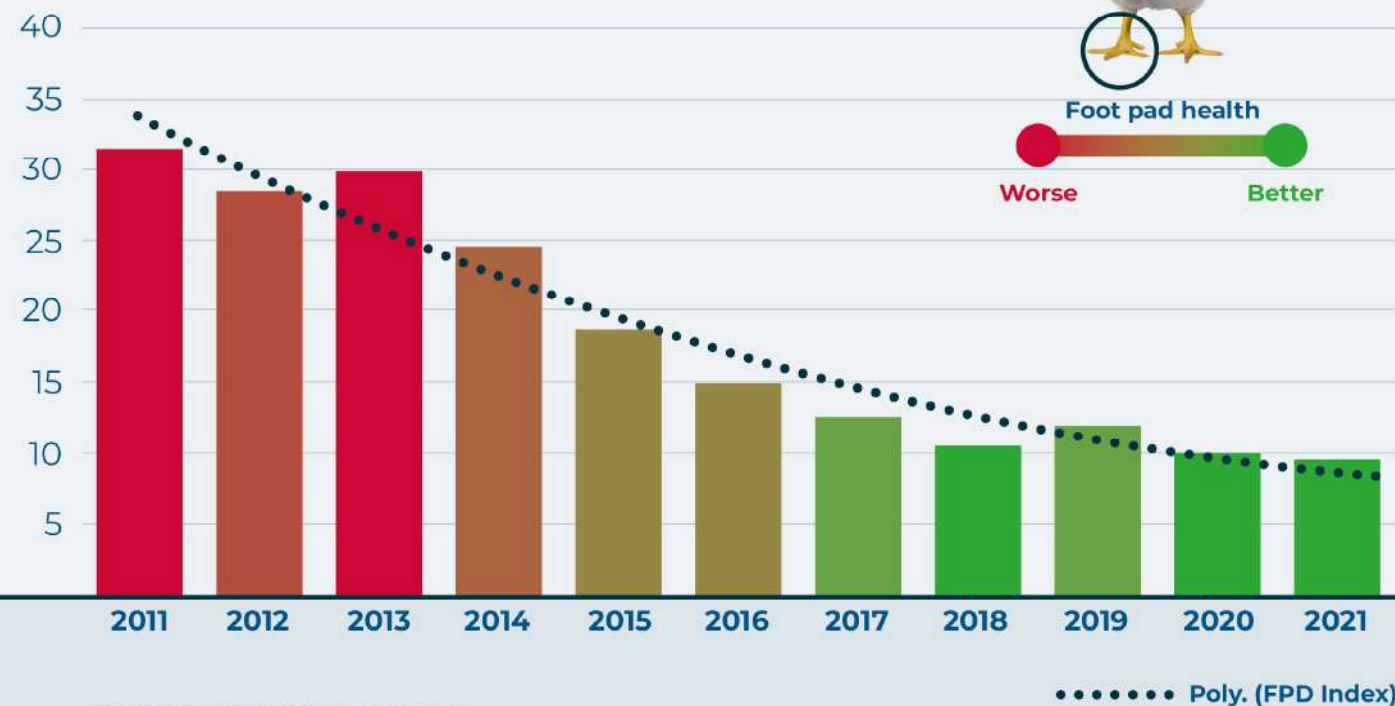
### REDUCED ENERGY USE

**Progress** in live weight, shorter  
grow-out periods and reduced  
feed production and transport =

**19%  
LOWER  
ENERGY  
USE**

## Breeding, Management & Monitoring Bring Success for Welfare

### Foot Pad Dermatitis (FPD) Index Danish Commercial Broiler Flocks



Index based on 100 feet per flock scored.  
No FPD = 0 points, Small FPD lesion = 0.5 points, Large FPD lesion = 2 points

- ✓ Breeding for foot pad health in combination with good Management actions has **delivered Real Welfare Benefits**
- ✓ Appropriate and detailed Monitoring Systems are **Crucial for success**



# Proposal for Verandas & Ranging areas increase risk for Bird Health

- The requirement for Verandas and Ranging areas are associated with significant higher risk to bird health
- EU field data clearly shows **high incidence of foot pad dermatitis** in flocks where outside space is used - only 54.1% FPD freedom (De Jong & te Beest, 2020)
- This is contrary to the objective to reduce foot pad dermatitis incidence, undoing the good progress made already in the EU broiler sector
- Adding verandas and ranging areas would **dramatically increase the risk of Avian Influenza exposure**, leading to higher depopulations and resulting poor impact on welfare
- This would be the case even if any vaccine programme would be successful



de Jong, I., & te Beest, D. (2020). *Development of the 'animal welfare' dimension within the Greenwell sustainability assessment model: 2. Data for all production stages and calculation of scores for the broiler on-farm stage*. (Report / Wageningen Livestock Research; No. 1260). Wageningen Livestock Research. <https://doi.org/10.18174/524330>



Moving to  
a 50g/day  
bird means  
Destroying  
years of  
sustainability  
progress



Using a 50g/day bird  
means a step back of  
more than 20 years  
of environmental and  
economic sustainability

## CO<sub>2</sub> EMISSIONS



Ranger Classic (50g/d)

↑ 56,157,700 tonnes



Ross 308

43,830,400 tonnes



Emissions would increase  
by 12,327,300 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>

## FEED



Ranger Classic (50g/d)

↑ 36,734,661



Ross 308

31,761,019



## WATER



Ranger Classic (50g/d)

↑ 66,122,390



Ross 308

57,169,835



## HOUSES



Ranger Classic (50g/d)

↑ 51,670



Ross 308

43,877



It would require building an  
additional 7,938 houses in EU

\*Leinonen, 2023 – personal communication

Based on Resource Requirement – Housing – EU27  
(total output 13,697,000 Tonnes broiler meat per year).

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# 11kg/m<sup>2</sup> stocking density means a Dramatic Reduction in EU Self-Sufficiency



**TODAY**  
40kg/m<sup>2</sup> stocking density



**PROPOSED**  
11kg/m<sup>2</sup>  
stocking density



11kg/m<sup>2</sup> stocking density requires an  
**extra 116,000 houses**  
**to be constructed in EU**  
**= not feasible/economically viable**



**EU Food Security is in Danger**

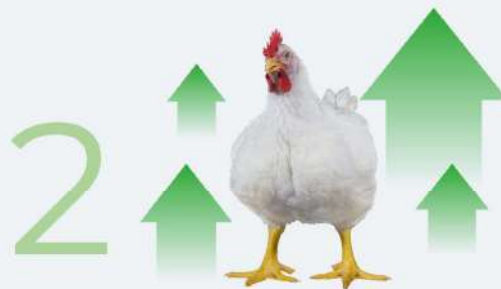


# In conclusion...



## 1 **Balanced breeding approach**

A modern, balanced breeding approach has a major focus on **health, welfare** and **sustainability**.



## 2 **Continued improvement in welfare traits**

Balanced breeding delivers **substantial progress in welfare characteristics** to the field now and in the future.



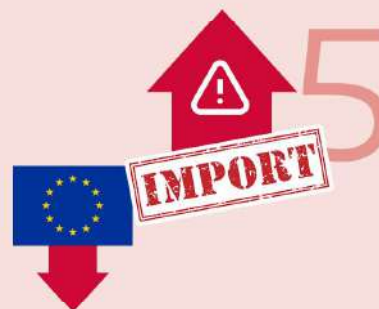
## 3 **The key role of management**

Good management can have more impact on welfare than breed or stock density. **Monitoring systems are crucial.**



## 4 **Highly questionable conclusions**

EFSA scientific opinion for 50g/day and 11kg/m<sup>2</sup> recommendations is **highly questionable and should be re-investigated**.



## 5 **EU broiler production would cease**

If EFSA scientific opinion was to become reality for legislation, the **EU broiler production would cease**, and be replaced with imported meat with poorer welfare, putting food security at risk.

## If EFSA scientific opinion was to become reality for legislation...



1

**A major risk to EU self sufficiency as EU broiler production would cease**



2

**Lower welfare through imports**



3

**No longer food on every table**



4

**EU Carbon Net Zero target by 2050 will be under threat**