

What “Good Care” Really Means in Modern Poultry Farming

At Tegel, animal welfare is at the heart of what we do. But “good care” isn’t defined by a single action, label, or moment in time. It’s the result of hundreds of small, considered decisions made every day by farmers, veterinarians, nutritionists, and specialists - all working together to raise healthy, thriving birds.



At its core, “good care” is about doing the right thing consistently.

Care starts from the very beginning

Good care begins from the moment a chick hatches. Early-life conditions are carefully managed such as temperature and humidity are adjusted to support early development, while handling practices are designed to minimise stress. As the birds grow, these settings are continually fine-tuned based on bird age, behaviour, and conditions.

Nutrition plays a key role too. Feed is specifically formulated for each stage of growth and tested to ensure it delivers the right balance of nutrients.

Our poultry veterinarians work closely with farmers and nutrition teams, monitoring bird health daily and responding quickly to any changes. This hands-on approach helps ensure birds remain healthy as they grow.

The environment is constantly managed

Creating the right environment is one of the most important parts of animal welfare and it requires constant attention.

Chickens can be raised in different systems, including barn-raised and free-range environments.

In free-range systems, birds have access to the outdoors, allowing them to explore and interact with their surroundings. In barn-raised systems, birds are kept indoors in carefully controlled environments that are designed to keep them comfortable, support healthy growth while protecting them from weather and disease risks.

While these systems differ, the focus on animal welfare remains the same.

Farmers walk their sheds every day, observing how birds are moving, eating, and behaving. These observations guide small but important adjustments, such as airflow, lighting, feed access, and water availability.

It’s this day-to-day responsiveness that supports bird health and allows them to express natural behaviours like foraging, dust bathing, and perching.

Science supports every decision

Behind the scenes, science plays a critical role in how we care for our birds.

Laboratory teams regularly test feed ingredients to ensure they are safe and nutritionally balanced, while ongoing monitoring helps identify and manage potential risks early. .

These systems support not only the wellbeing of the birds, but also the quality and safety of the food produced.

It takes a whole system to deliver good welfare

Sophie Shaw, GM Technical Services at Tegel says animal welfare is a shared responsibility across the entire operation. “From farmers and veterinarians to lab technicians and processing teams, everyone plays a role in maintaining standards and doing the right thing by the animals in their care.”

All Tegel farms are SPCA Certified, meaning they are independently audited against recognised animal welfare standards. This includes checks on housing conditions, access to food and water, bird health, and the ability for birds to exhibit natural behaviours. That external oversight is an important part of ensuring we continue to meet and improve on what good care looks like.

It takes a whole system to deliver good welfare

At its core, good care is about consistency. It involves combining scientific expertise with practical experience, building systems that support both animals and the people responsible for them, and recognising that animal welfare is not static - it requires constant attention, learning, and improvement.

Perhaps most importantly, it's about people. Behind every system, protocol, and decision are individuals who have chosen to work with animals and who take that responsibility seriously.

That's what good care really looks like.

