



**How can the revision  
of EU marketing standards  
enhance sustainable production  
in the egg and poultry sectors?**



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Who are we?

# ERPA and rural poultry

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🐔 ERPA is the European network representing professional producers of **rural poultry** in Europe ; created in 2007

- 🐔 Our members:
- 🐔 National associations of producers or companies
  - 🐔 Breeders, for meat and eggs
  - 🐔 From many countries: Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Romania



# ERPA and rural poultry

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 Our missions are:

- **to represent professional producers of rural poultry** in the EU, with no opposition to standard poultry
- **to help preserve rural poultry production** and its **genetic diversity** in Europe, by recognizing its specificities in the European legislation

 ERPA is recognized at European level :

- Member of 3 civil dialogue groups of DG AGRI (poultry/eggs, organic, quality)
- Member of the Animal Welfare Platform of the European Commission, member of the subgroup on animal welfare labelling
- Member of the Animal Health Advisory Committee of DG SANTE

# What is rural poultry?

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- ☛ **Free range** poultry & laying hens
- ☛ Rustic **slow-growing breeds**
- ☛ **Extensive farming**
- ☛ **Farms and poultry houses with limited size**, on a human scale
- ☛ **Quality products and official quality signs**: organic poultry & eggs, PGI, Label Rouge (France) ; small and local slaughterhouses



# Example of rural poultry in France (Label Rouge)



**Small buildings:** 400 m<sup>2</sup> max., 4400 birds max/building



Access to large meadows with vegetation and trees  
which allow the poultry to be **in the fresh air all day long**  
2 m<sup>2</sup> minimum/birds





A **low stocking density** in barns  
+ a lot of chickens are outside



# Example of rural laying hens in Spain





# Example of rural laying hens in the Czech Republic



# Rural poultry is a sustainable production

## **SOCIAL**

- Social expectations: animal welfare, slow growth, quality, proximity, local supply
- Farmers = women and men proud of their local production in their territories

## **ECONOMIC**

- Economic sustainability in rural areas
- Human sized farms allow accessible investments for all farmers



## **ECOLOGICAL**

- Respect of animal welfare
- Preservation of animal and vegetal biodiversity (agroforestry)
- Use of slow growth genetic, more resistant and adapted to all climate conditions
- Local origin of the feed
- Small-scale production
- Very low use of antibiotics

**Marketing standards,**  
with the definitions of  
“farming methods” / “types of farming”,  
are a very important tool to help  
this sustainable production  
to exist and develop

**1 key idea:** marketing standards for eggs and poultrymeat have allowed alternative productions to be better known to consumers, to find a place on the market and to grow.

Marketing standards allow :

- the **same level playing field** for all European producers
- a **better visibility** of these alternative products: they are more expensive ⇨ necessary to make their specificities known to keep their position on the market
- a **clear information** for consumers: they know precisely what they buy, marketing standards avoid confusion and abuse.



Reenforcing  
marketing  
standards  
for eggs



## “Farming methods” defined in the marketing standards for eggs - **mandatory labelling**:

0 – organic

1 – free range

2 – barn

3 – cage

with some criteria for each type of farming.

⇒ ERPA proposes 3 evolutions of marketing standards to **enhance sustainable production**

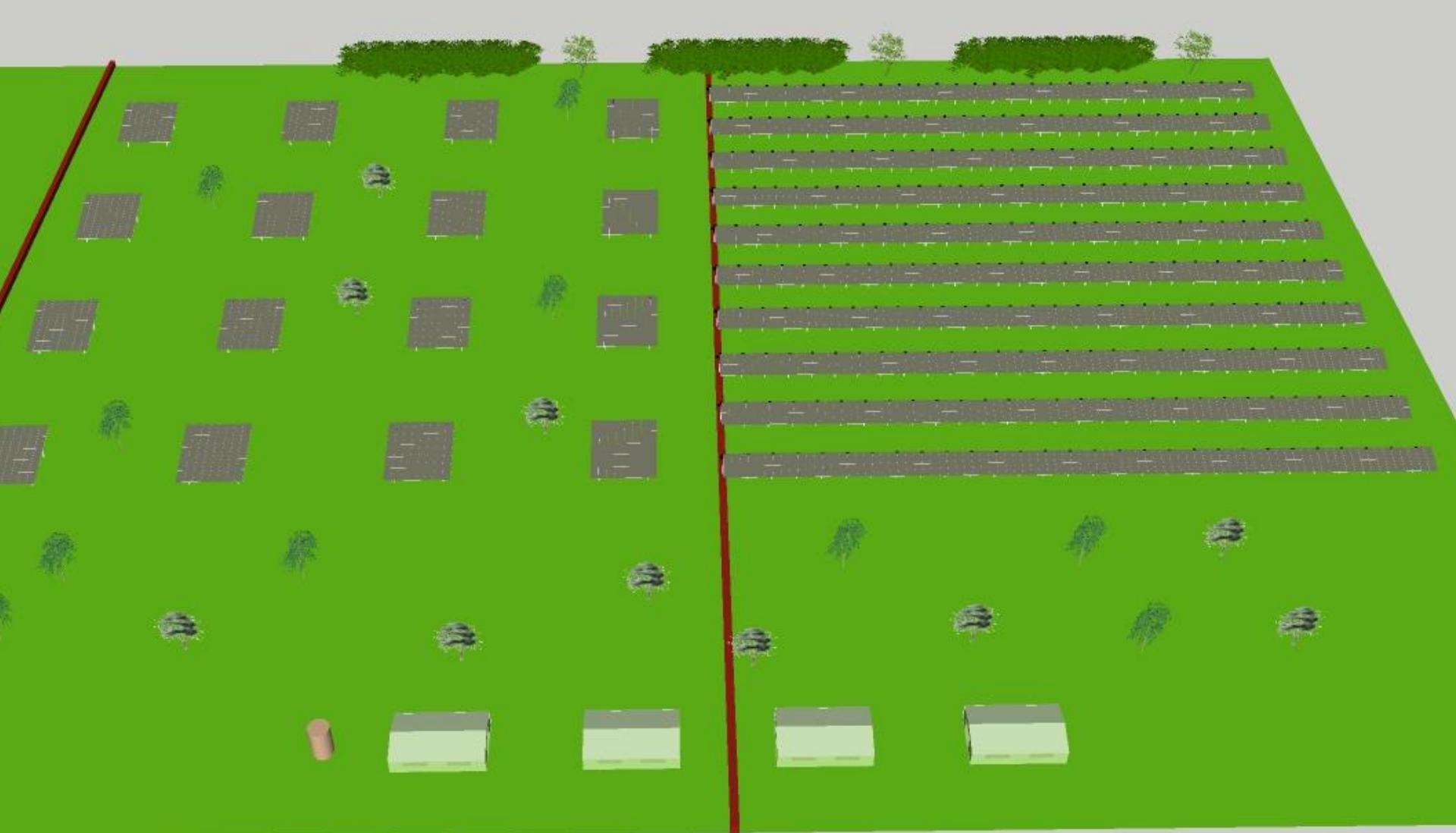
# 1: To allow solar panels on free range areas



But to a certain extent, in order not to alter free range areas:

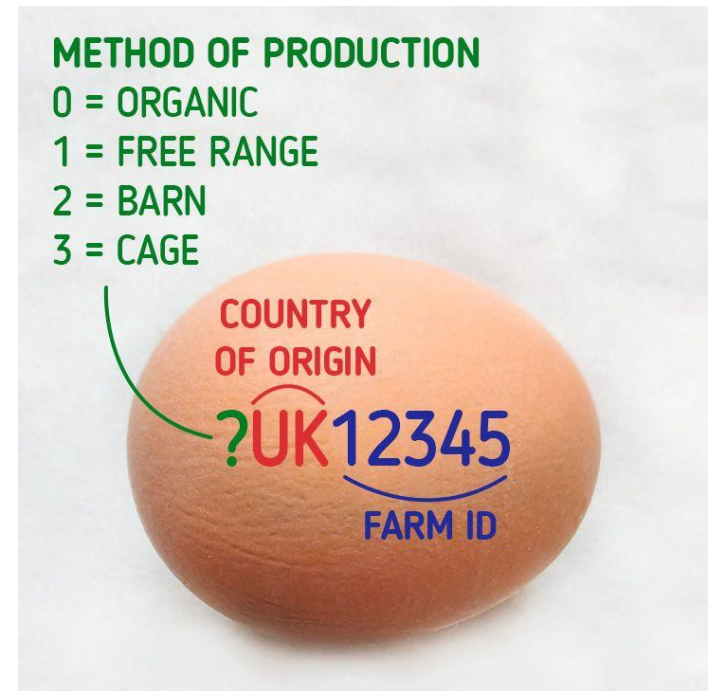
**YES**

**NO!**



## 2 & 3: 2 measures aiming to prevent frauds, to give guarantees to the consumers that they really buy sustainable products

- the marking of eggs on the farm
- the adoption of an annual control for all alternative farming methods (codes 1 and 2) to check the correct application of the criteria laid down in the marketing standards





Maintaining  
ambitious  
marketing  
standards for  
poultrymeat

**“Types of farming” defined in the marketing standards for poultrymeat - **voluntary labelling**:**

- (a) ‘Fed with ... % ...’
- (b) ‘Extensive indoor’ (‘Barn-reared’)
- (c) ‘Free range’
- (d) ‘Traditional free range’
- (e) ‘Free range — total freedom’

with clear and precise definitions for each type of farming: age, stocking density, surface of free-range area, feed...

with obligation of “regular inspections” to check the compliance of stakeholders with these criteria.

# European marketing standards (Regul. 543/2008)

|                            | (b) 'extensive indoor'                                   | (c) 'Free range'   | (d) 'Traditional free range'                                       | (e) 'total freedom'   |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Type of growth             | -  | -  | Slow growth<br>(In reality: about 28 grams/day = real slow growth) |   |
| Minimum age (rearing time) |  | 56   | 81   |   |
| Outdoor access             | NO   | Yes<br>(1 m <sup>2</sup> /chicken)                         | Yes<br>(2 m <sup>2</sup> /chicken)                                 | Yes<br>(Unlimited, 4m <sup>2</sup> reserved/chicken)  |
| Stocking density           | 15 chickens max/m <sup>2</sup><br>& 25 kg/m <sup>2</sup> | 13 chickens max/m <sup>2</sup><br>& 27.5 kg/m <sup>2</sup> | 12 chickens max/m <sup>2</sup><br>& 25 kg/m <sup>2</sup>           | 12 chickens max/m <sup>2</sup><br>& 25 kg/m <sup>2</sup><br><br>If mobile buildings: 20 & 40 kg |
| Size of buildings          | —  | —  | Maximum 400 m <sup>2</sup> and maximum 1 600 m <sup>2</sup> / site |   |

= high level in terms of alternative and sustainable productions

⇒ ERPA thinks that keeping them as they are is fundamental to the sustainability of the alternative sector:

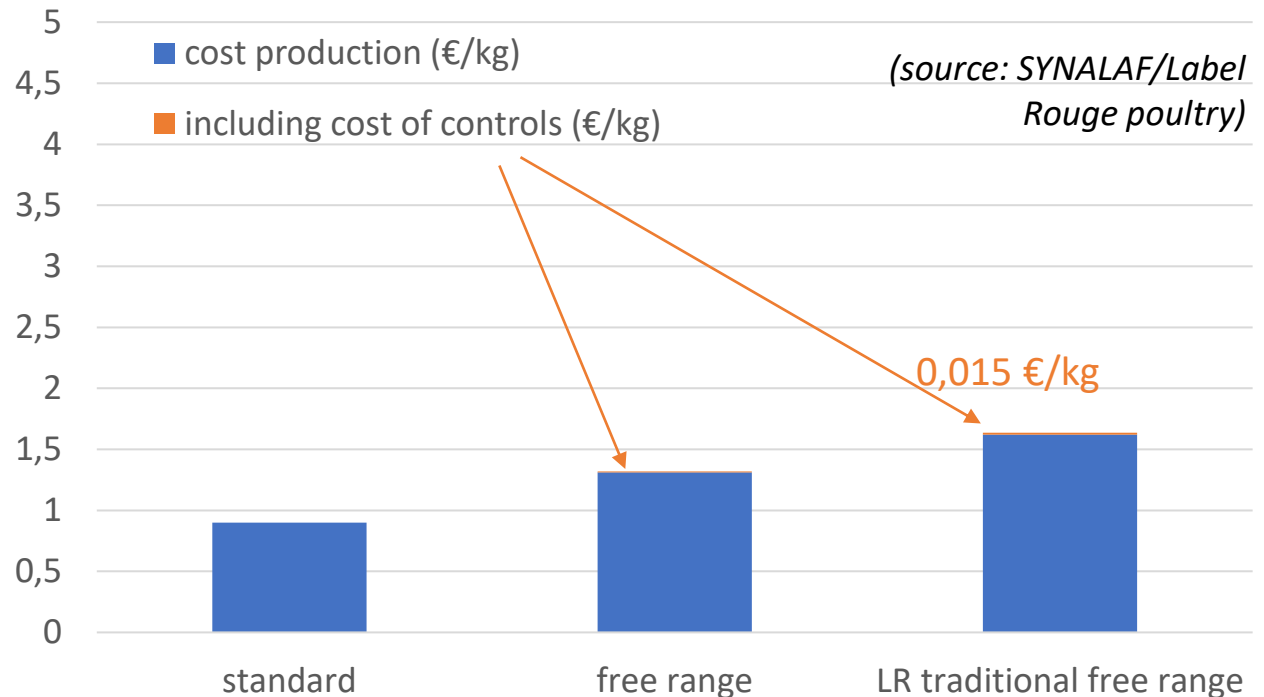
- maintain the current rules and definitions especially for “free-range” and “traditional free-range” productions
- maintain the obligation of control of these optional farming methods to check the correct application of the criteria



# An example of costs and benefits of marketing standards:

## The case of Label Rouge “traditional free range” chickens in France

### 🐔 Costs:



### 🐔 Benefits:

- LR traditional free range chickens represent more than 50% of whole chickens purchased by French consumers
- 4000 farmers, contributing to the economic sustainability of rural territories in France

⇒ **The benefits clearly outweigh the costs.**

# Conclusion

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- It is important to preserve rural poultry which totally meet the expectations of the Farm to Fork strategy, especially in terms of sustainability
- Marketing standards for eggs and poultrymeat are important tools for alternative and sustainable productions in the egg and poultry sector ⇒ important to maintain them, and take into account the expectations of this sector

