

E-learning tool of the German 'Initiative Tierwohl' label

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Intro to Good Practice

Broiler farmers are operating in a context that requires them to acquire more knowledge given the public concern for animal welfare. Farmer training can help to create awareness of animal welfare and greater understanding of the significance of welfare for successful animal production. The 'Initiative Tierwohl' (ITW) created such a training program within their label in Germany.

For this, ITW offers an online training program (www.gefluegelbesserwisser.de), which includes comprehensive training for poultry farmers and their animal care takers that can be carried out at any time from home and serves as annual proof of training. In this training program, all areas of broiler husbandry are covered (see Figure 1).

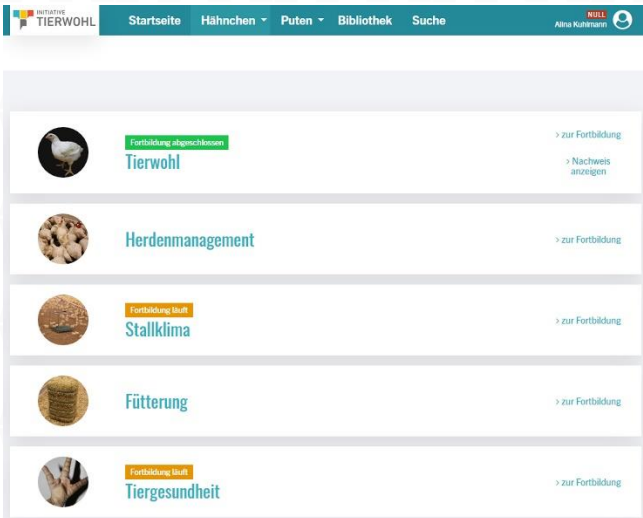


Fig. 1: Overview of the themes that are tested (i.e. animal welfare, herd management, barn climate, feeding, animal health)

Background & challenges

- Broiler farmers are offered a total of 5 courses including 40 units on animal welfare, animal health, barn climate, flock management and feeding in the form of photos, short texts, diagrams, and videos (see Figure 2 and 3).
- At the end of each module, knowledge is tested and only those who pass the test receive the required certificate for the corresponding unit, as well as an overall certificate for completing the entire training program.
- The training program also includes a library with additional information on specific topics for broiler keepers who want to learn more about.
- The online training program is offered in two languages, German and Polish (but can be expanded in the future).



Annual online farmer training within the German 'Initiative Tierwohl' label

Additional information

- The online tool was developed together with the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences and Ulmer Verlag Corporate Media and is intended to be continuously updated according to new insights.
- The big advantages of online training are the flexibility, saving of travel time and travel costs, but also the fact that a multilingual offer is easier to implement than during face-to-face events.
- The risk of online training is that a certain level of trust must be placed in the candidate in order to complete the training diligently. Moreover, there is a risk for lack of understanding, as open questions cannot directly be answered.



Fig. 2: Detailed description about health problems with young chicks.

Benefits

- The ITW training program is available free of charge to all members of the initiative.
- Broiler keepers are obligated to complete an annual training course and get the opportunity to train themselves online with this tool for free together with their animal caretaker.
- Participating in a training program, like from ITW, enhances farmers' understanding of the importance of animal welfare for successful animal production. Therefore, it is expected that those farms with a training certificate can reduce their mortality rates, enhance animal health and performance, while improving overall broiler welfare.

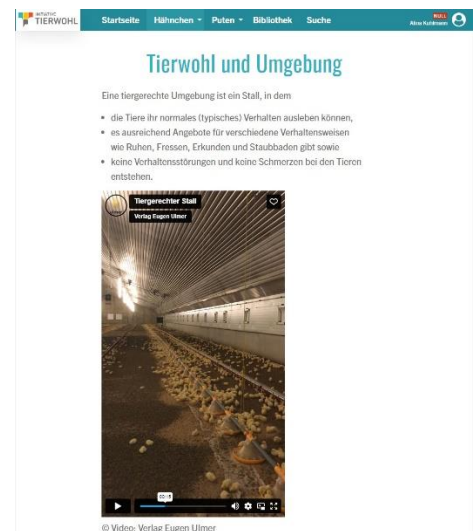


Fig. 3: Explanation with video about what animal welfare looks like in the barn.



Watch this German introduction video about the ITW training program to find out how the training tool works and how you can obtain your annual training certificate. This is the first web training program for poultry farmers in Germany used to train broiler and turkey keepers and their animal care takers on an annual basis. ITW is an association of German food retailers, farmers and meat industry stakeholders.

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