



COW-FRIENDLY LYING

What are the benefits
of longer stall mats?





Generous free stall dimensions are now a standard feature in barn planning. For example, greater width and gentler animal control are provided (dividers for more freedom of movement, flexible or curved neck rails, ergonomic brisket boards, etc.). Additionally, the design now allows for greater depth in the free stalls. This offers the possibility of longer free stall mats.

Real-world experience with longer lying areas

Real-world experience with longer lying areas above 1.90 m in elevated stalls has been very positive. When a stall is set up and controlled properly, cows position themselves better in the stalls when lying down and lie straighter and visibly more relaxed due to greater free space at the front. This not only increases lying comfort, but also noticeably improves the cleanliness of cows and elevated stalls. The tails lie predominantly in the stall and the risk of injuries is reduced. This also enables standing with the hind legs in the free stall and relieves the hooves.

It is important to ensure the correct positioning of the neck rail and brisket board in accordance with the general recommendation.

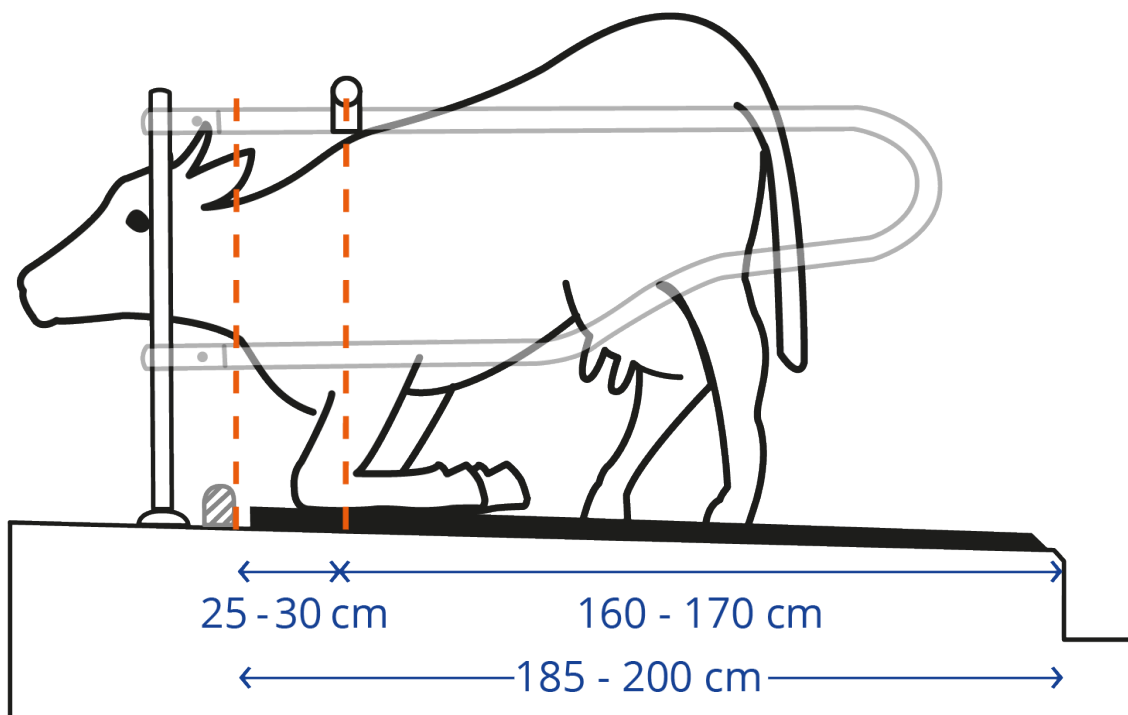
Proper setting and control of free stalls (Positioning of neck rail and bricket board)

The general recommendation for the horizontal distance between the neck rail and the manure edge is 160 - 170 cm.

Just as important as the positioning and design of the neck rail is its interaction with the bricket board.

Minimum distance neck rail – bricket board: 25 - 30 cm

An optimally positioned bricket board should be at least 25 centimeters, preferably 30 cm ¹⁾ in front of the neck rail. This prevents cows from colliding with the bricket board when lying down and therefore lying too far back or at an angle. A cow can lie down and get up well and assume relaxed lying positions, preferably with a sufficiently long lying area.





Longer lying mats for more freedom when lying, lying down and getting up

To achieve the sufficient distance between the manure edge, the neck rail and the brisket board, free stall flooring measuring more than 1.90 m in length are needed.

In combination with longer lying mats, this all adds up to the perfect solution:

- They prevent lying at an angle and improve lying positions
- Tails are predominantly in the stall
- Cows and lying areas are visibly cleaner
- The risk of hairless areas on the hock joints is reduced
- Standing with the hind legs in the free stall is still enabled
- In many cases, a brisket boundary is no longer required

Is a brisket board still necessary at all?

In many barns, the use of a brisket board is then no longer necessary. Correctly adjusted control devices can provide the desired benefits – the longer stall length makes this possible. This is another important piece of the puzzle to provide more freedom of movement for cows in free stalls, making it easier for them to lie down and get up and enabling more natural lying positions.

Dirty free stalls, reduced lying times?

Longer free stalls offer the solution!

Two years ago, the Primbs family dared to experiment and converted six free stalls to a lying length of 1.92 m on a trial basis. The brisket board was removed for this purpose. With outstanding success: The lying position improved significantly in over 90% of the cows. After a 6-month “test run”, all the free stalls were ultimately converted. **Find out more in the video.**



Summary: Longer lying lengths for improved animal health and cleanliness

The dimensions of stalls and lying mats in a barn always represent a compromise between animal comfort, labor efficiency and hygiene. In practice, however, it has been shown that longer lying lengths are a good and simple way of providing cows with an appropriate lying place with sufficient space and good comfort, while at the same time ensuring the cleanliness of the animal and the stall with little effort.

KRAIBURG lying mats in XL length

KEW Plus and KEW Plus TarsaCare

3-layer mattress system

maxiBOX

For elevated deep bedded stalls

KIM LongLine

Robust continuous roll system

Sources:

1) Landwirtschaftskammer NRW (further dimension recommendations may vary depending on the manufacturer of the control devices)