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The Effect of Feather Score on Egg Quality Traits

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Abstract

In this study, the effect of feather score on egg quality traits was investigated. A total of 60 Lohman Brown layer chickens were used as animal materials. Experimental groups were formed when the hens were 60 weeks old and, based on the average total feather score included low (less than 12 points, L); medium (between 12 and 18, M); high (more than 18, H). The average total feather scores were obtained from scoring the 6 body regions of hens: breast, back, cloaca, neck, wing, and tail. Quality traits of eggs were analyzed when the experimental birds reached 68 weeks of age. The results indicated statistically significant differences in the egg weight, redness of eggshell, shape index, and eggshell thickness among the feather score groups: the egg weight decreased with the increase in feather score, and the eggshell thickness increased with the increase in the feather scores. The redness of eggshell and the shape index were highest in the M group.

It was concluded that while feather score can modulate some external egg traits, it does not lead to variations in any internal egg quality traits. However, further studies are required to confirm these findings.

Key Words: : Laying hen, feather score, egg weight, shape index, eggshell thickness

