EFFECT OF CAGE SIZE, FLOOR TYPE AND STOCKING DENSITY ON THE MEAT QUALITY OF GROWING RABBITS

A KETRECMÉRET, A PADOZAT ÉS A TELEPÍTÉSI SŰRŰSÉG HATÁSA A NÖVENDÉKNYULAK HÚSMINŐSÉGÉRE

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The experiment was carried out with Pannon White growing rabbits, which were divided into four experimental groups:
1. rabbits were reared in pens, on wire net floor, at 16 rabbits/m² stocking density,
2. rabbits were reared in pens, on wire net floor, at 12 rabbits/m² stocking density,
3. rabbits were reared in pens, on straw litter, at 12 rabbits/m² stocking density,
4. rabbits were reared in conventional cages (2 rabbits/cage, 16 rabbits/m²).

The experiment took place between 5 and 11 weeks of age. At the end of the trial animals were slaughtered, and the following meat quality parameters were measured: pH 24 hours after slaughter in the *m. Longissimus dorsi* and in the hind leg meat, dry matter content in the *m. Longissimus dorsi* and in the hind leg meat, meat color (L, a*, b*) in the *m. Longissimus dorsi*, dropping, cooking and thawing loss in the *m. Longissimus dorsi* and the share force also in the *m. Longissimus dorsi*. Based on the results it was established, that the pH was not affected by the cage size, floor type and stocking density. The dry matter content of the hind leg meat was significantly higher in the conventional cages, on the wire net floor and at 12 rabbits/m² stocking density. The dropping and thawing loss of the *m. Longissimus dorsi* was highest in rabbits reared on the straw litter floor. The cooking loss was affected significantly only by the size of cage. The share force was significantly affected by the cage size and stocking density. It was concluded, that rearing on straw litter decreases the dry matter content and increases the dropping and thawing loss in the rabbit meat, therefore this rearing method is not suggestible for the practice.

Kulcsszavak: nyúl, húsminőség, ketrecméret, padozat, telepítési sűrűség