

Effect of stocking density on growth performance of meat-type female turkeys⁽¹⁾

Sheng-Der Wang⁽²⁾ Chin-Meng Wang⁽²⁾⁽⁵⁾ Bo-Ling Shih⁽³⁾ Chih-Chang Hsiao⁽²⁾ and Yu-Shine Jea⁽⁴⁾

Received: Jan. 6, 2015; Accepted: Jul. 27, 2015

Abstract

This study was to investigate the effect of stocking density on growth performance, foot pad score and dressing percentage of meat-type female turkeys. A total of eighty B.U.T. 6 commercial female birds were purchased from a commercial hatchery at 10 days of age. The turkeys were randomly allotted into 8 pens. After 68 days of age, 72 turkeys were allotted into 4 treatments, i.e. 17.3, 21.6, 25.4 and 29.7 kg/m² of stocking density. There were 3 pens per treatment and each pen had 6 turkeys. Results showed that there was no significant effect of stocking density from 17.3 to 29.7 kg/m² on body weight, feed intake, body weight gain and feed conversion rate of female turkeys during the 68 to 129 days of age were observed. Foot pad score and dressing percentage of female turkeys were also not affected by the stocking density. There was a regression relation between the stocking density and the feed conversion rate in the feeding duration from 87 to 102 days of age. The regression equation was $y = 0.0277x + 2.6821$, $t = 2.63$, $P = 0.0253$, $R^2 = 0.41$. The results suggested that increased stocking density in range of 17.3 to 29.7 kg/m² diminished feed conversion rate of meat-type female turkeys from 87 to 102 days of age.

Key words: Female turkeys, Stocking density, Growth performance.

(1) Contribution No. 2305 from Livestock Research Institute, Council of Agriculture, Executive Yuan.

(2) Changhua Animal Propagation Station, COA-LRI, Changhua 521, Taiwan, R.O.C.

(3) Nutrition Division, COA-LRI, Hsinhua 712, Tainan, Taiwan, R.O.C.

(4) Hsinchu Branch, COA-LRI, Hsinchu 368, Miaoli, Taiwan, R.O.C.

(5) Corresponding author, E-mail: cmwang@mail.tlri.gov.tw.