

News & Comments

Comparison of Two-layer Strains' Usage of the Area, Welfare, and Egg Production*Alison Walter*

Laying hens have better opportunity to engage in natural behaviours and have more freedom to spread out in outdoor range areas, but birds are also exposed to potentially stressful elements like weather and predators. To guarantee good welfare, it is important to take different strains' capacities for coping with difficult circumstances into account. Hens with outdoor access have more room and better possibilities to engage in highly motivated behaviours like dustbathing and foraging. The birds with outside access have reduced occurrences of feather pecking and better plumage health. "At the same time, the advantages that hens receive from having access to the outdoors mostly depend on the birds' decision to use the space and their capacity for survival." The researchers said. The investigation was conducted at the poultry research facility at Aarhus University, Foulum, from May 3-September 27, 2018. From two hybrid lines (N = 1200), Dekalb White (DW, n = 600), and Bovans Brown (BB, n = 600), they employed non-beak trimmed laying chickens. The hue of the egg matched that of the hen. With a focus on their roaming behaviour, the authors of the current study examined the suitability of two common laying hen hybrids, the Dekalb White and the Bovans Brown, for organic egg production. The 2 hybrids were found to differ in several ways, including how they used ranges and shelters, how frequently various welfare issues occurred, how well their eggs were produced, and other factors.

According to previous findings from 2002, Lohmann Selected Leghorn hens had greater access to the range than Lohmann Tradition hens. Given that tonic immobility periods have been genetically linked to growth and body weight, selection for production may have unintentionally resulted in the selection of more frightened birds. The extent to which the range was used and the distance that birds were willing to go from popholes in their study may have been affected by fearfulness. Studies have shown that compared to the ancestor red junglefowl, high-producing current strains of laying hens may alter foraging behaviour and exhibit lesser motivation to search for less energy-dense food sources.

In contrast to Lohmann Tradition chickens, Lohmann Selected Leghorn hens had more access to the range. Selection for production may have unintentionally selected for more terrified birds because tonic immobility intervals have been genetically linked to growth and body weight. Fear may have had an impact on how far birds were willing to travel from popholes in the study as well as how much range was utilised. High-producing modern breeds of laying hens may modify foraging behaviour and have less drive to look for less energizing food sources, according to studies compared to the ancestral



red junglefowl.

KEYWORDS

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