Worthwhile Operational Guidelines & Suggestions

Broiler Carcass Condemnation – Inflammatory Process

Inflammatory process, which is also known as infectious process or cellulitis, can occur due to scratches on the skin, sometimes becoming infected with *Escherichia coli*. Broiler skin scratches can range from a light scratch on the skin to severe damage and infection. The occurrence of scratches with or without infection can lead to necessary carcass trimming, downgrading, and carcass condemnation. Attention to broiler management is the most effective way to minimize the frequency of scratches that may lead to inflammatory process. Methods for minimizing scratches include avoiding overcrowding and excessive activity.

There are several areas to consider when avoiding overcrowding. Stocking densities need to be maintained at appropriate levels, adequate space at feeders and drinkers should be provided, even bird distribution to avoid crowding through whole-house brooding, migration barriers, consistent temperature and light throughout the house, and proper set-up during catching.

To avoid excessive bird activity, dim lights after the first week of age and keep the lights low during walk-throughs and maintenance. Conduct house walk-throughs less frequently and more slowly as the birds age. Avoid periods of feed outages where the birds will crowd at the feeders once feed becomes available. Monitor bird activity following long dark periods which may mimic feed outage due to a lack of eating during darkness. Finally, keep birds as calm as possible during catching and ensure that piling along the walls and corners is minimized.