Worthwhile Operational Guidelines & Suggestions

Breast Muscle Myopathies – Spaghetti Breast

New year, new myopathy. When spaghetti breast was previously described by Dr. Bilgili in the February 2015 WOGS newsletter, the occurrence was very low. However, more recently, the frequency of this myopathy appears to have increased and become of greater concern. Spaghetti breast has previously been named poor cohesion, friable, or stringy/mushy. The myopathy presents as a loose structure with separation of muscle fiber bundles, typically in the cranial part of the fillet. Affected tissue shows muscle fiber degeneration and regeneration, hyalinization, poor uniformity, impaired fat deposition, and muscle fiber detachment due to rarefaction of endo- and peri-mysial connective tissue. In addition to the visual appearance, meat quality characteristics are also impacted. Spaghetti breast has higher moisture, lower protein content, and higher ultimate pH than normal fillets. Similar to white striping and woody breast, spaghetti breast is attributed to increased growth rates and breast yields. The presence of spaghetti breast leads to downgrading and the need for further processing. Mitigation strategies are not yet known but may be similar to strategies used to minimize woody breast.