
Editorial

Back in 1998, soon after this Journal increased its frequency of publication from three to four times a year, an idea was conceived to create a special emphasis issue built around the topic of poultry meat processing and meat quality. The reason for doing this was, in part, precipitated by the EC's termination of its financial support for the FLAIR/COST programme that had resulted in the publication of a series of booklets on aspects of processing. It was felt that the Journal might offer an alternative opportunity for publishing this sort of information and so go some way towards compensating for the loss of the valuable service carried out under the FLAIR/COST scheme.

Contributions were commissioned and a number of authors submitted papers, but for a number of reasons, the project did not come to fruition and it developed into an embarrassing sad and sorry saga.

Although the Journal is not generally in favour of the concept of 'special emphasis issues', when I took over as editor, we decided to try and regenerate the poultry processing project. This was mainly so that the authors who had contributed originally, should have their time and efforts properly rewarded by having their papers published. Three of them, Dr S.F. "Sarge" Bilgili, Prof. Dan Fletcher and Prof. Alan Sams kindly agreed to update their papers and we are most grateful to them for their cooperation.

We would also like to acknowledge the valuable help and encouragement given by Dr Roelof Mulder from The Netherlands who was the mastermind behind the whole project.

Dr Bilgili reviews the basic research as well as the practical aspects of implementing feed withdrawal programmes under field conditions. Feed is withdrawn from poultry prior to slaughter in order to reduce the potential for carcass contamination from crop and intestinal contents. In his appraisal of factors affecting poultry meat quality, Dan Fletcher selects appearance and texture as the two most important meat quality attributes. He explains why an understanding of the major issues contributing to poultry colour and meat tenderness is critical in producing uniform quality products. Post mortem electrical stimulation (ES) is not new technology but has only recently become a commercial possibility for use in broiler processing to reduce the toughness of meat. In reviewing the latest developments in this area, Alan Sams comes to the conclusion that ES is a complex technology with many factors that need to be controlled for its successful use.

Two papers are concerned with product quality and safety. Dr C.A. Kan from the Lelystad Institute looks at the prevention and control of contaminants of industrial processes and pesticides in the poultry production chain. The current public demand for farm animal production that is in balance with the animals' needs and a residue-free product adds even more complications to the system. The distinguished world-recognised authority, Professor Geoffrey Mead reviews the factors affecting intestinal colonisation of poultry by campylobacter and examines the role of microflora in control.

Completing our poultry processing and meat quality round up, Gisela Hahn and her colleague M. Spindler from the meat research institute at Kulmbach in Germany present a new method for dissecting the turkey carcass in order to establish a working standard that will allow comparison of results.

David Martin
Editor

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