INFLUENCE OF REARING SYSTEM ON CARCASS CHARACTERISTICS OF GUINEA FOWL (*NUMIDA MELEAGRIS*) AT DIFFERENT AGES

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A 16 weeks biological experiment was conducted to find out the influence of rearing system on carcass characteristics of Guinea fowl at different ages. A total of 320 one day old Guinea fowl keets of a single hatch were randomly divided into two treatment groups (T1 and T2) with four replicates of 40 chicks each under deep litter and cage system of management. Standard nutritional and managerial condition was followed throughout the experiment. Totally 144 birds including twenty four birds from each system per age group were randomly selected at 12, 14 and 16 weeks of age (WOA) and were subjected for carcass studies. The birds reared on cages had significantly (p<0.01) higher pre-slaughter live weight at 12, 14 and 16 WOA respectively. Significantly (p<0.01) higher mean per cent giblet weight, wing and neck yield was recorded for deep litter reared Guinea fowls at 12, 14 and 16 WOA respectively. The rearing system did not have any influence on per cent New York dressed weight, eviscerated carcass weight, dressing percentage, breast, back, thigh and drumstick yields of Guinea fowls at different ages. It can be concluded that guinea fowls can be reared under both cage and deep litter systems for meat production.