EVALUATION OF OPTIMUM SLAUGHTER AGE BASED ON CARCASS TRAITS OF CROSSBRED PIGS

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The experiment was carried out at Pig Breeding Unit of Livestock Research Station, Kattupakkam to evaluate the optimum slaughter age based on carcass traits of crossbred pigs (50 per cent LWY and Desi pigs). A random sample of 18 crossbred grower male pigs were selected at weaning, castrated and were divided into three groups and fed with concentrate feed and maintained under uniform management conditions. Monthly body weights were taken and the experimental pigs were slaughtered at 7th, 8th and 9th month of age to study important carcass traits. The final body weights at 7th, 8th and 9th month of age were 37.67 ± 2.40 kg, 49.08 ± 1.95 kg and 56.50 ± 4.70 kg respectively. Statistical analysis was carried out for carcass traits, of which, dressing percentage is an important trait which influenced most of the carcass characteristics. With respect to loin eye area, significant (P<0.05) differences existed between the 7th and 8th months and 7th and 9th months of slaughter age, while no difference was found between the 8th and
th month of age. In case of carcass length and back fat thickness, significant (P<0.05) differences existed between the pigs slaughtered at 7th and 9th month of age. From this analysis, to achieve a maximum dressing percentage, lower back fat thickness and leaner meat, the 9th month of age is the ideal age for slaughter in 50 per cent crossbred pigs.