

DIFFERENT METHODS OF FEED RESTRICTIONS IN BROILER BREEDER CHICKEN

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The modern broiler breeder female is the product of intensive genetic selection for two important but conflicting criteria, rapid and efficient growth and a high rate of egg production. Selection for increased juvenile body weight and enhanced meat yield in broilers has also resulted in a disproportional increase in voluntary feed intake. Unlike layers that are able to self-regulate their feed intake to closely match the energy requirements for maintenance, growth, and reproduction. Modern broiler breeders, if given unrestricted access to feed, will over consume well beyond what is needed to achieve energy homeostasis. As a result, they soon reach a state of positive energy balance, which progresses with advancing age. Therefore, birds that are destined for breeder flocks are severely feed restricted. Feed restriction is often accomplished using Skip-A-Day (SAD) programme. The age at which these regimes are initiated is generally a few weeks after hatch, lasting until onset of lay. There are however different forms of SAD programmes. One method is true SAD feeding, where birds are fed every other day, resulting in four feed days one week, followed by three feed days in the second week. Another method is four-three SAD. This means the birds are fed four days every week resulting in back to back feed days each week. Another method is five-two where birds are fed five days every week. The 5-2 method results in three consecutive feed days, followed by skip-a-day and two consecutive feed days each week. All these methods are based on daily feed allowances that ensure all birds get the same amount, volume and nutritional value for the week; they just get fed this allotment over a number of days.

