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Influence of Stocking Density on Bone Development in Family Chickens Reared up to 18 Weeks of Age Under Intensive System

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Abstract: This study investigated the influence of stocking density on bone development of family chickens up to 18 weeks of age. A total of 232 unsexed day-old family chicks were used in a completely randomized design. Birds were randomly assigned to four stocking densities, i.e., D1 (10 birds/m²), D2 (13 birds/m²), D3 (16 birds/m²) and D4 (19 birds/m²) in the first phase (0-6 weeks). Each treatment was replicated four times. Two birds were slaughtered at 6, 12 and 18 weeks of age from each replicate to evaluate bone length, bone width, bone weight and bone **chemical composition** (ash weight, Ca, P and Mg). In the second phase (7 to 12 weeks) the stocking densities were 8 birds/m² (D1), 11 birds/m² (D2), 14 birds/m² (D3) and 17 birds/m² and 6 birds/m² (D1), 9

Navigation

- Online First
- Current Issue
- Previous Issues
- Editorial Board
- Submit a Manuscript
- Guide to Authors
- Subscribe to E-alerts

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