

Predictability of Live Weight

Accurate information on live weight and coefficient of variation (CV%) for each flock is essential in planning the appropriate age for slaughter and to ensure that the maximum number of birds fall into the desired weight bands at slaughter. As growth rate increases and as slaughter age becomes earlier, prediction of live-weight gain over more than 2–3 days is less accurate. Accurate estimation and prediction of flock live weight at slaughter requires large numbers of birds (greater than 100) to be repeatedly sampled close to slaughter age (within 2–3 days).

Birds can be weighed using manual or automatic weighing scales. Unexpected changes in live weight may be indicative of scale error or malfunction. Scales should be regularly checked for accuracy.

When using manual scales the birds should be weighed at least 3 times per week. On each occasion, equal sized samples of birds should be taken from at least 2 locations in each house.

Place automatic weighing systems where large numbers of birds congregate and where individual birds will remain long enough for weights to be recorded.

Key Points

- Weigh a sufficiently large number of birds.
- Weigh birds that are representative of the whole flock.
- Use accurate scales
- Weigh birds frequently and accurately to ensure effective prediction of live weight at slaughter.