

PROCEEDINGS



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Breeding technology of red-partridges: colonies or couples	

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Introduction

In pheasants, the use of the breeding technology which employs the colony instead of the traditional family increases the fertility percentages of the laid eggs and, as a consequence, the number of day old pheasants produced per hen housed (Bagliacca, 1989; Bagliacca et al., 1990). Following our research addressed to the increase of the productivity of the game-bird farms (Bagliacca et al., 1988; Paci et al., 1990), a new technology, which suggests the possibility of breeding red-partridges (RP) in colony (3 males with 7 females, in pens on the ground) was compared with the traditional breeding system (fixed couple, bred in cage).

Materials and Methods

73 couples and 10 colonies of RP were used for the trial. Number and weight of eggs, health of the birds and climatic parameters were daily monitored. Feed consumption, fertility and hatchability of the eggs were weekly monitored.

Results and Discussion

Performance of couple-bred partridges and colony-bred partridges are reported in table 1.

Table 1 Observed performances in RP.

	COUPLES	COLONIES
Laying rate per hen (13 weeks).....%	30,4 NS	28.8 NS
Fertility (on incubated eggs).....%	73.5 B	80.1 A
Hatchability (on fertile eggs).....%	72.6 NS	73.3 NS
Hatchability (on incubated eggs)....%	53.4 B	58.7 A
Feed cons. per n° of eggs laid.....g	263 A	218 B

Means bearing different superscripts differ per $P < .01$.

The comparison of the different technologies showed that: the production of colony-bred birds was not reduced by the unnatural technique; feed consumption per number of egg laid was reduced in the colonies, due to the reduction of the numbers of males; the

fertility of the first eggs laid was increased in relation to the competition between males; this increased the influence of the strongest and the most fertile males with the consequent improvement in number and quality of the offspring.

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