

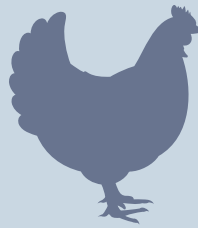
Traditional Layers

VS

Dual-Purpose Birds

When Comparing Intensive Egg Production

Birds raised for their ability to produce a high volume of quality eggs.



Birds raised for their abilities in egg production and to serve as a source of meat.

CHARACTERISTIC		SUPERIOR	
		Traditional Layers	Dual-Purpose Birds
EGG PERFORMANCE	Heavier at every age	X	
	Higher laying performance	X	
	Lower number of broken / shell-less eggs*	X	X
	Produced larger eggs	X	
	Maintained higher laying performance as birds aged	X	
BEHAVIOR	Utilized elevated roosts more often		X
	Least amount of feather loss at the end of the rearing period		X
HEALTH	Pulled less calcium from bones to produce eggs	X	
	Stronger keel bones	X	
	Less prone to food pad lesions	X	

*The study revealed no difference between the number of broken or shell-less eggs.

Broilers or Layers?

Modern, efficient chicken farms usually raise breeds bred to produce either high-quality meat (broilers) or a high volume of high-quality eggs (layers). Over the years, birds have been bred with traits to make either broilers or layers as efficient and productive as possible.

For the layer industry, this selection comes at a price. Males, which cannot lay and don't produce meat efficiently, are often euthanized as chicks. This practice has come under question in many countries. In Germany and France, legislation has been put into place to stop the killing of day-old chicks.

Producers are left with two choices: To employ expensive technologies to determine chick sex before hatching or to raise male birds as a source of meat. Scientists at the Institute of Animal Welfare and Animal Husbandry, in Germany, analyzed how this kind of dual-purpose breed may fare when it comes to egg performance, behavior and health. Their findings are in the chart above.

Sources & Information

Poultry Science Association
www.poultryscience.org

This research comes from a 2022 paper published in *The Journal of Applied Poultry Research*.

Read the Full Paper by scanning the QR Code.

