

RESEARCH ON THE MATURATION OF MEAT FROM THE ILE-DE-FRANCE AND MERINOS DE PALAS BREEDS

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Abstract

This paper aims to conduct a comparative study on the wet aging process and evaluate its effects on the physical parameters of meat from Ile de France and Merinos de Palas sheep breeds. The study focused on two specific anatomical regions, the leg (*Musculus biceps femoris*), and the ribeye (*Musculus longissimus dorsi*), to identify differences and similarities in the evolution of meat quality based on breed and region. The research monitored pH fluctuations during the aging process for both breeds and evaluated their impact on meat quality. The study investigated the processes of oxidation and degradation of pigments and lipids in the meat, as well as methods for maintaining an appealing and stable color, which is essential for consumers' perception of meat freshness and quality. Comparing the physical parameters between the *Ile de France* and *Merinos de Palas* breeds allowed the identification of differences and similarities in the influence of wet aging on the leg and ribeye. The sheep meat industry can benefit from the implementation of an integrated system for monitoring and adjusting aging conditions, which should include pH parameters, sensory qualities, and color evolution. Educating consumers on how these factors affect meat quality, along with promoting sustainable production practices, can help increase appreciation and demand for high-quality sheep meat.

Keywords: sheep meat, Ile de France, Merinos de Palas