

The management of fattening

The control of health and growth during the fattening period is essential for the proper technical and economic results of the group. This control requires a feed rationing adapted to the objectives of weight and age at slaughter and the sanitary situation.

The choice of feed range and rationing are used to validate with your feed supplier.



The daily observation of animals and the continuous adaptation of the feeding program to the situation are essential elements for the proper management of fattening.

1) The quantity rationing

→ The feed restriction can be done with the amount of feed distributed per day.

→ In this case, it is essential to:

- Validate the quantities distributed by the feeding system,
- Adjust quantities distributed to feed characteristics and growth objectives,
- Validate the density of the feed.

→ Quantitative feeding programs for crossbred rabbits from HYCOLE males are provided in Facts No. 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4.



The feeding program must be modulated by:

- **The weight and health status at weaning,**
- **The growth,**
- **The mortality and health status of animals.**



The objective of quantity rationing is to have a daily period of at least 12 hours where the feeders should be completely empty.

2) The rationing with duration

→ It is possible to control the amount ingested by animals by limiting duration of feed distribution.

- To estimate the duration distribution, several factors are taken into account:
- objective amount of feed distributed at each age,
 - the capacity of the feeders,
 - the rate of feed consumption of the rabbits: 20 grams the 1st hour and about 10-15 grams/hour following hours.



The objective of rationing in duration is to have a daily period of at least 12 hours where the feeders should be completely empty.

- To calibrate the feeding program, it is advisable to start the distribution in the evening to confirm the time that the feeders are empty during the visit in the morning.



From a technical point of view, it is preferable to distribute feed during the night.

3) The monitoring of growth



It is necessary to control the growth of animals from weaning to selling.

- Weigh a sample of **at least 5% of weaned animals.**

The controlled cages should always be the same during the fattening period and spread evenly over the entire room (rabbits from nulliparous and multiparous, upper and lower cages, beginning and end of row...)

- The sample must be weighed two times a week **at fixed day and time.**

- Carry forward average weight and A.D.G. (Average Daily Gain) on the growth chart adapted to the male used for insemination (Fact No. 4.2 for HYCOLE White, Fact No.4.3 for HYCOLE Coloured and Fact No. 4.4).

4) The modulation of the rationing program

- Depending on the growth achieved compared with the recommendations, the level of mortality and the health status of the group, if necessary adapt the amount of feed distributed.

- **The health status of the group.** It is important to record the daily mortality.



If mortality is more than 0.3% / day, two days away, it is necessary to limit the amount of feed distributed and to treat the animals if necessary, depending on the health status.

- The growth of the group. The goal is to be at the reference level defined by genetic type.
- If the animals are **below** the target, the distribution duration and/or quantity can be increased more than program defined, if the health status is not a problem. .
 - If the animals are **above** the target, increasing of the distribution duration and/or quantity can be lower than the program.

It is therefore important to change the distribution duration and/or quantity functions of the health and the growth of the group.

The monitoring of ADG of the lot is essential for the proper monitoring of the group.