

ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED

Laval Mayenne Technopole, Lycée Agricole de Laval, ITAVI, Le Gars Daudet

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Valorization of male chicks of laying hen races

The Food Waste Problem

In hatcheries of laying hens, male embryonated eggs are destroyed (50 million per year in France and as much in Germany and 45 million in the Netherlands). Since 2002, a German federal law specifies that the welfare of the animal outweighs any economic interest and that it is therefore no longer acceptable to produce high productivity laying hens knowing that their brothers are systematically euthanized. The prohibition of this practice could rapidly spread in Europe. It is therefore important for the poultry industry to quickly find socially and economically acceptable alternatives.



The Food Waste Solution

A general study on this problem was carried out by ITAVI (French technical Institute for poultry, July 2016) under the title "Alternatives to the elimination of male chicks". It indicates three possible and socially acceptable alternatives to this practice: **in-ovo sexing, selection of dual-use (or dual) strains and the breeding of current parents.**

Although the R&D is carried out by European companies (In-Ovo in the Netherlands, Seleggt in Germany, Tronico in France), it seems that sexing in ovo is not a solution applicable on a large scale and in the short term .

This is the reason why we decided to study and experiment an innovative breeding system for the "laying hen brothers" and a marketing means for their promotion.

In the Netherlands farmer Peter van Agt has developed a system in which mobile stables with 250 laying hens are placed in nature areas and are being moved each 3 weeks. Geluksvogel is another initiative working with this system. Also in the Netherlands 'Kipster' has started to grow the 'brothers' of the laying hens and to process the meat to chick burgers, in a special collaboration with Lidl supermarkets. And Lankerenhof organic farm grows male chicks.



The Food Waste Impact of the Solution

During the project (inspiration for the project in France):
249 male chicks were raised by Peter van Agt in a mobile stable
249 male chicks were raised by Geluksvogel in a mobile stable
17.000 male chicks were raised by Kipster
2.500 male chicks were raised by Lankerenhof in 2017 and 2018
935 male chicks were raised by SR in 2018
Total: 20.933 male chicks raised.

2020:
1200 male chicks in Coricomobile project in France
17.000 male chicks by Kipster
1250 male chicks by Lankerenhof
Total: 21.150 male chicks raised

5 years after project end
500.000 male chicks

10 years after project end
1.450.000 male chicks

Project Food Heroes aims to reduce food losses in the primary sectors (on farm and fisheries) by creating higher value uses for byproducts and products that are out of specification. Throwing it away is such a waste. This project is funded by INTERREG North West Europe, European Regional Development Fund.