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MAKE CAPON, SAVE NATIVE CHICKEN BREEDS

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Abstract: *The biggest task of the poultry sector is to supply the population with cheap and healthy products, so that farmers can make economic production. In addition to mass production, the market also needs special products that can be considered as curiosities. Modern breeds and hybrids have nowadays pushed traditional old breeds out of production, so we need to look for ways of producing these breeds that will enable us to keep them in production and thus contribute to keeping them more economically. One solution could be the production of special products. In order to maintain our universities elite stock of Speckled Hungarian Chicken, we are looking for opportunities to obtain other sources of income by producing salable products in addition to state support. In our work, we want to revive an old, forgotten method of producing capon, a special, saleable curiosity product from our indigenous chickens.*

• Introduction

In the last 50 years, as a result of the spreading of poultry hybrids, the indigenous chicken varieties became endangered. Our old species are not compatible with the modern ones, they cannot keep up with the intensive, economical production. We must aspire to preserve our old species and their important characteristics so that we will be able to utilise them later for breeding. Beside the gene preservation, we endeavour to find the best way for the production-purpose utilisation of our speckled chicken stocks. The experiment was designed to revive an old traditional method, the caponizing, to produce curiosity products for gastronomy. Getting a new product accepted by consumers is not an easy task. Capon meat is a forgotten product that was very popular in the past. In our experiment, we tested this product and had people taste it because we were curious about its popularity.

• Material and method

We used 40 roosters for our experiment at the Pilot Farm of University of Szeged. 20 roosters were kept as controls, 20 roosters at 12-week-old age were castrated in mid-June and reared until mid-December. We weighed them weekly and slaughtered them before Christmas. We cut them into body parts and weighed the parts. The rooster and capon thighs and breasts were roasted without spices and taste-tested with 80 people. We also tasted broiler chicken meat as a control. In a laboratory, we examined the contents of the rooster and capon meat.

• Results and discussions

Capon production in pictures



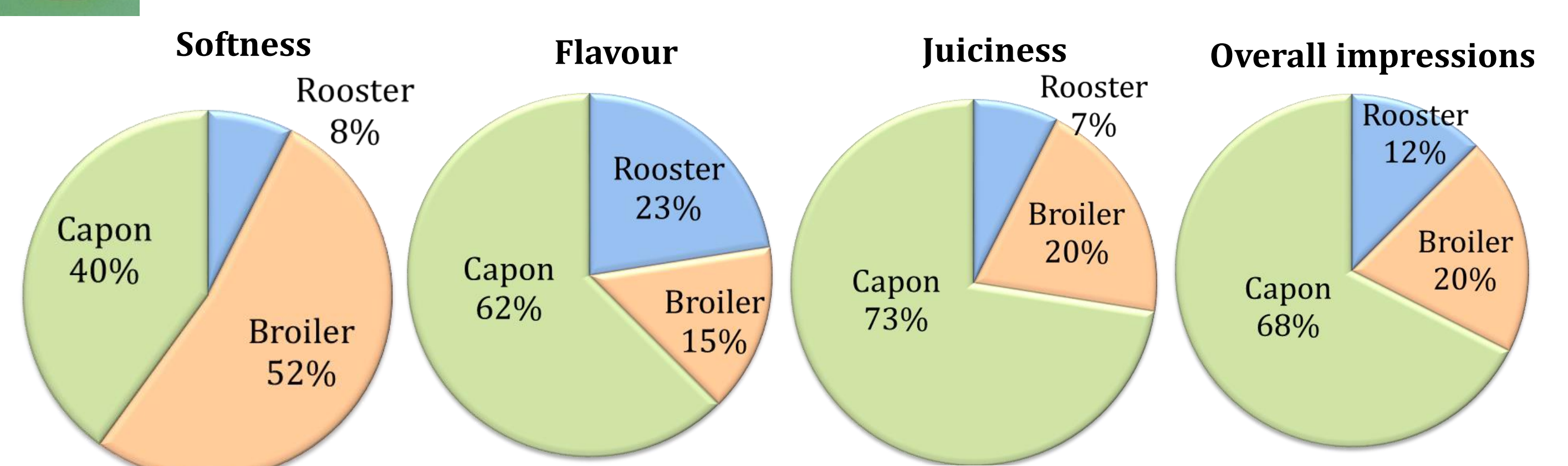
Unsaturated fatty acid content (%)

Unsaturated fatty acid	breast meat			thigh meat		
	Rooster	Capon	Broiler	Rooster	Capon	Broiler
linoleic (C18:2 n-6)	33.95	37.87	17.8	34.42	40.40	18.3
linolenic (C18:3 n-3)	0.22	0.31	0.5	0.19	0.11	0.7
arachidonic acid (C20:4 n-6)	0.29	0.30	5.0	0.33	0.30	3.7
eicosapentaenoic acid (C20:5 n-3)	0.13	0.08	0.7	0.08	0.01	0.6

The data of meat content analysis

Meat sample		Dry matter content (%)		Fat content (%)		Crude protein content Nx6,25 (%)	
		repetition	average	repetition	average	repetition	average
breast	rooster	25,37	25,88	0,67	0,60	23,83	23,96
		26,40		0,53		24,09	
	capon	28,18	28,13	3,01	3,05	24,16	24,21
		28,08		3,10		24,26	
thigh	rooster	24,62	24,67	3,18	3,03	20,43	20,37
		24,73		2,89		20,32	
	capon	29,25	29,39	8,35	8,32	19,63	19,84
		29,53		8,29		20,04	

Organoleptic test results



• Conclusions

Our native chickens are able to produce quality and healthy products that are marketable. With this products expansion, we can contribute to the more economical **genetic preservation** of our native chickens.