

Broiler Project Reflection

The broiler grow out project was an opportunity to see all the steps that go into the poultry industry daily. We observed the birds during different parts of the grow out period which gave us the opportunity to watch how different factors are changed as the birds grow and change in behavior. There are key things that I am taking away from the broiler grow out project. These takeaways will only help when I get into the industry.

The most interesting part of the project was learning about live birds. I learned about the importance of changing the water line height as well as the feeder height. One difference between our experiment and industry is that we did not cull. Without culling, we had to base our water line height off the smallest birds to ensure that they could consume enough water. The next thing that we watched in the grow out process were how the ventilation changes as the birds grow. The rooms that our experiment took place in were small. In these small rooms, it was easier to regulate our air circulation and temperature. On day 14 and 42 we had the opportunity to weigh feeders and the birds to collect data. This experience will only help going forward because it shows how crucial data collection can be. If the data is lost or not collected right, then the results could be altered. I learned that there are loads of work that goes into the actual grow out period of a poultry experiment.

The processing plant is the profit center for the whole poultry complex. In this project, we learned about each part of the processing plant while both observing and some hands-on experience. We learned the differences between our research based processing plant and an industry processing plant. In our research plant, we can adjust equipment to allow for different sized birds to come on the line. I learned about why we adjust certain things as well as what to look for to see if something needs adjusting. One week after we processed our birds, I was able to experience one of my favorite parts of the project which was learning how

to debone chicken. We deboned the chicken and weighed the breast meat to calculate our breast yield.

Though we were not the best beginners, we learned the basics and nonetheless could watch people that were good at it.

The most important thing that I learned in this project is how to collect data and use Excel to translate the data the way that I needed too. Excel was a huge headache when I was first putting data into it, but after getting the hang of it and learning some small things about how to put formulas into my spreadsheets, it proved to be helpful. Learning how to create graphs was a useful tool while I was trying to interpret the data. I never knew that Excel was such a complicated program until I was working on this project. I learned that there are different ways that data collection can be shown and interpreted. The complexity of Excel allows for it to be useful in different contexts as well. I will use my skills that I gained about Excel in other classes at Auburn University, as well as, when I am in the industry.

In conclusion, I learned that there are many different parts that go into research experiments. These different parts must be done carefully to provide good results. The project was a fun way of learning for me. It gave us the opportunity to learn somewhere other than a classroom. We also got to see how birds react in different environments. These environments were controlled so that there would be noticeable differences that we could make comparisons with. The hands-on experience was the best part of the project. The most important thing that I gained was learning how to navigate Excel better. Excel will be a useful tool moving forward and I am thankful for this project that taught me things that I did not know about Excel. This project showed me that research is not an easy thing to do and it takes hard work and paying attention to details to get things done the right way.