

Instant Insights

Bone health in poultry

This collection features four peer-reviewed literature reviews on bone health in poultry. The first chapter reviews the literature on genetic mapping of skeletal traits in both broilers and layers, including both the genetics of skeletal defects and bone quality. As the chapter shows, linkage mapping and genome-wide association studies have identified promising candidate genes with potential for breeding more robust birds. The second chapter focuses on bacterial chondronecrosis with osteomyelitis (BCO), one of the most common causes of lameness in broilers. The chapter summarizes the pathogenesis of BCO and reviews the efficacy of probiotics as a prophylactic treatment. The third chapter discusses bone health in laying hens. It reviews bone development, keel and other bone health problems and factors contributing to poor bone health. It also summarises key strategies for improving bone health, including breeding, nutrition, rearing practices and housing. The final chapter assesses the problem of lameness in intensively-reared broiler flocks. The chapter also discusses skin health in broilers. It summarises key risk factors as well as ways of monitoring and reducing the problem, from breeding programmes and enrichment to sequential feeding regimes.

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