

II. — CARCASSES AND MEAT QUALITY

Commercial carcass grading on the basis of data from progeny-testing stations

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Two groups of female bacon pigs (more than 2500) from Brittany and Northern France were slaughtered, carcass graded and then cut to determine their muscle content. The theoretical carcass grading was made according to the EEC standard (per section of 5 p. 100 muscle content) which will soon be the only one used.

The muscle content only accounted for half the variations in carcass grading in Brittany ($R^2 = 0.52$), slightly more in the North ($R^2 = 0.63$). No overestimation was observed, but half the carcasses were underestimated. The relationship between carcass grading and cutting was rather steady between 1975 and 1983.

The price differences between Brittany and the North led to muscle weighting of 6.50 and 13.74 F/kg, respectively, i.e. to mean differences of 6.5 and 13.7 centimes/kg per p. 100 of muscle content. When defining the payment system of the new carcass grading it would be advisable to take into account the present conditions of muscle valorization. Brittany and Northern France could represent the lower and upper limits.

Influence of sexual type (entire male, castrated male, female) on ham composition of hypermuscled pigs (Belgian Landrace and Pietrain)

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The generalized distance of *Mahalanobis* was used to study the differences in ham composition (relative amount of fat, muscle and bone and muscle distribution) between entire males, castrated males and females of the *Belgian Landrace* and *Pietrain* breeds.

The maximum distance was observed between entire male *Pietrain* and castrated *Belgian Landrace* pigs. In both breeds the distances were short between castrated males and females. Between sexual types they were larger in the *Pietrain* breed.

In each breed it was possible to distinguish each of the three sexual types using a small number of traits. Those which discriminated the best each sexual type were not quite the same in both breeds. Thus, for meat trade and meat technology the definition of commercial ham must be based on sex and breed.