

The Poultry Post



Importance of Brooding at Correct Temperatures

Gas prices seem to be getting higher and higher these days. Chick placement on a warm day is a God-send this winter. The temptation to reduce brooding temperatures to save on fuel costs I'm sure is high. Chicks getting off to a good start is crucial in their future performance. Chicks can not regulate their body temperatures until around 10 days of age, and cool temperatures will cause higher feed conversions and low weight gains. Chicks will be eating to stay warm instead of eating to gain weight. Also studies have been shown that cooler temperatures will double

mortality and triple ascites. The following are results of a study conducted at the USDA research laboratory in Starkville, MS. Groups were brooded at 95, 90, 85, and 80 degrees during the first week. Temperatures were dropped five degrees each week until the birds were three weeks of age. Chicks were given unlimited access to feed and water. Ending body weights were .11 pounds lighter on those brooded at cooler temperatures. Also, feed conversions were .17 points higher and mortality doubled on birds that were brooded at cooler temperatures. In the end money that will be saved on the fuel bill will not compensate for the money lost in bird performance.

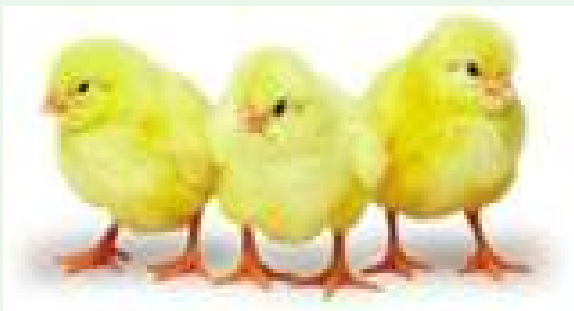


FIGURE 1. The effect of brooding temperature on body weight of broiler males at 3 weeks of age. Columns with different letters differ significantly ($P \leq 0.05$).

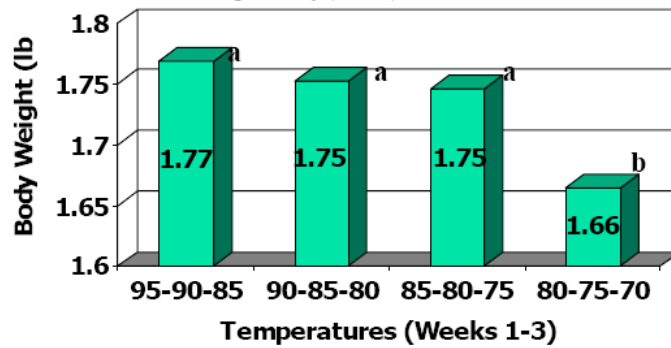


FIGURE 2. The effect of brooding temperature on feed conversion of broiler males at 3 weeks of age. Columns with different letters differ significantly ($P \leq 0.05$).

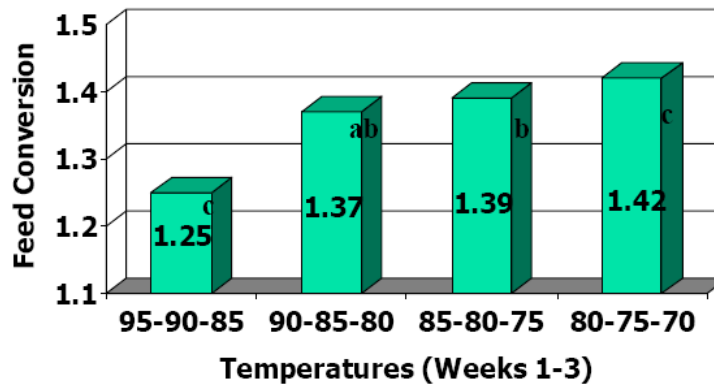
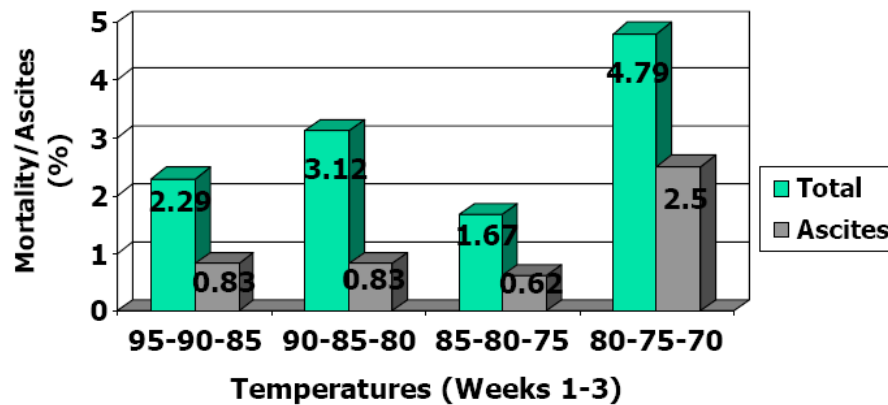


FIGURE 3. The effect of brooding temperature on mortality and ascites of broiler males at 6 weeks of age.



<http://www.poultry.uga.edu/tips/01200620B.pdf>

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First Quarter

February 2008

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