

## **Preslaughter handling and slaughtering factors influencing carcass quality**

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### **SUMMARY**

Over the past few decades, the European processing industry has gradually increased the availability of poultry meat in a large variety of products. Carcass quality is a complex and multivariate property, which is affected by multiple interacting factors including genetics, feeding, husbandry, preslaughter handling, stunning and slaughter procedures, chilling, processing and storage conditions. However, it is likely that the effects exerted by *ante-mortem* handling (feed withdrawal, catching, crating, transport and lairage) and slaughter (hanging, stunning, killing, scalding, plucking, evisceration, chilling and processing) conditions on final product quality may be greater than those attributable to variation in husbandry practises. Many problems may occur at these stages that potentially increase the rate of carcass downgrading. This lecture is aimed at making a general statement of recent studies on the effects exerted by preslaughter handling and slaughtering on carcass quality.