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IMPROVEMENT OF SOME NUTRITIONAL AND PRODUCTIVE TRAITS IN SINAI FOWL

by

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INTRODUCTION

Indigenous Egyptian breeds of chickens have the advantages of being well adapted to local environment conditions and genetic resistance to some severe diseases such as Marek. Moreover, Egyptian consumers prefer the taste and flavor of native local chickens and eggs.

There is no detailed information about the productive performance of Sinai fowl with the exception of studies conducted in Israel during the ocupation period in Sinai Peninsula (Arad et al., 1975, Arad and Marder, 1982 a, b and c) which have proved that Sinai fowls have the ability of producing higher quality eggs compared to the egg quality of the high producing breeds such as Leghorn. However, these studies showed that the Sinai fowl produces fewer and smaller eggs resulting in a decreased egg mass output compared to Leghorn layers.

Studies conducted by Soltan et al. (1985) indicated that means of egg number, egg weight, feed consumption (g/bird/day) and feed efficiency (g/g egg mass) were 20.7 eggs, 47.2 g, 67.47 g and 6.34 g, respectively. Soltan and El-Nady (1986) found that average body weights were 357.6, 486.6 and 711.6 g for Sinai selected at 12, 16 and 20 weeks. Corresponding values for control line were 347.7, 510 and 717.7 g in the same respective order. They added that viability of sinai

selected chickens were 94.2, 92.9, 92.5, 89.3, 83.6 and 83.3% at 8-12, 12-16, 16-20, hatch-12, hatch-16 and hatch-20 weeks of age, respectively. Soltan (1991b)stated that, in general, selection is a very important tool for breeders to select Sinai strains on the basis of partial records.

Soltan and Ahmed (1990) showed that means of egg number, age at sexual maturity and egg weight of Sinai-selected were 34.5 eggs, 186.6 days and 41.1 g, respectively. Corresponding values were 31.6 eggs, 211.9 days and 42.0 g for the control line. Soltan(1991) and 1992) investigated some phenotypic and genetic parameters of body reactions in Sinai fowl in order to utilize experimental data in breeding programs. He reported that Sinai fowl laid heavier eggs (43.3 g) compared to both Fayoumi (37.3 g) and Baladi (39.2 g).

The present work was conducted to study the existing productive traits for Sinai breed as basic information for planning selection programs to increase the rate of egg production and to improve egg quality.