

WATER QUALITY FROM NIPPLE DRINKERS OF BROILER CHICKENS AND LAYING HENS

(QUALIDADE DA ÁGUA DE BEBEDOUROS TIPO NIPPLE DE FRANGOS DE CORTE E DE POEDEIRAS COMERCIAIS)

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The quality of the water supplied to the birds directly impacts production. Thus, the objective of this experiment was to evaluate the microbiological quality of the water supplied to broilers and laying hens at the Faculdade de Ciências Agrárias e Veterinárias/ UNESP / Jaboticabal. The samples were collected directly from the nipple drinkers using sterile vials and spatulas (APHA, 1998). The determination of the most probable number (MPN) of total coliforms and *Escherichia coli* was performed by the chromogenic-fluorogenic hydrolysable-substrate (Colitag) (APHA, 1998). The water of broilers presented 8.0 MPN/100 mL of total coliforms and 5.0 MPN/100 mL of *E. coli* while the water supplied to the laying hen had 162.0 MPN/100 mL of total coliforms and 6.0 MPN/100 mL of *E. coli*. With respect to the amount of total coliforms, the water supplied to the laying hens was more contaminated compared to that of broilers. The CONAMA Resolution 357/05 allows up to 1,000 MPN of *E. coli* per 100 ml of water for animal consumption, and both samples are within these parameters. Thus, it can be concluded that the nipple drinkers retain the quality of the water supplied to both laying hens and broilers. Probably, the higher values of total coliforms in the drinking water of laying hens compared to that provided to broilers is due to longer time that laying hens use the drinkers and the consequent longer exposure of the nipple valve to contamination by the birds' beaks.

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