

Meat quality of Cameroon lambs and rams – initial observations

Summary

Cameroon sheep are a breed of hair sheep raised in Europe for their high-quality skins and tasty meat. Due to their natural resistance to difficult environmental conditions, parasites and bacterial diseases, as well as their low feed requirements, Cameroon sheep can be an interesting animal for agritourism farms. The meat of Cameroon lambs and rams has beneficial physicochemical properties which depend on the animal's age and on the muscle analysed. It is worth noting the high level of fat in the muscles, which may be due to the extensive feeding system and to breed determinants. The fatty acid profile, proportions of individual fatty acid groups and especially the n-6/n-3 PUFA ratio in Cameroon sheep are beneficial in terms of human nutrition. This may be due to their slower growth rate and the traditional extensive feeding system used. As the age of the sheep increased, there was a decrease in lightness of colour and a marked increase in red colour in the muscles analysed, accompanied by a deterioration of meat texture parameters. Cameroon sheep can be a source of good quality meat that can be recommended to consumers, especially since, according to many reports, the meat does not have the characteristic odour typical of meat obtained from wool breeds.

KEY WORDS: physicochemical properties of meat, fatty acid profile, meat colour, texture parameters