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Local poultry breed assessment in Piedmont (north-west Italy)

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A research project founded by the University of Torino (Italy) aims at improving the poultry production chain of two local breeds ("Bionda Piemontese" and "Bianca di Saluzzo") by the characterization, conservation and enhancement of these breeds. These breeds are included in the list of the Slow Food Presidia. Preliminary data about census of these local breeds are given.

The size population results composed by around 16000 birds for "Bionda Piemontese" and 4000 birds for "Bianca di Saluzzo". It is estimated that, in 2012, 45.000 chicks of "Bionda Piemontese" and 12.000 chicks of "Bianca di Saluzzo" were produced. Animal density is 0.25-1.7 m²/bird for indoor space, and 1.5-25.0 m²/bird for outdoor paddock; the slaughter age (days±s.d.) is 223±69 for hens, 202±46 for cocks and 268±8 for capons. The slaughter weight (kg±s.d.) is 1.8±0.2 for hens, 2.2±0.2 for cocks and 2.9±0.3 for capons. The 56% of farmers are men (average age: 41 years) and 44% women (average age: 51 years). Farming is the main activity in 66% of cases, followed by agritourism (17%) and other activities (17%). The preservation of these local population contributes to biodiversity and conservation of local farming systems.