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Fauve de Bourgogne (France)

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SUMMARY – A description of the French breed Fauve de Bourgogne is carried out. Items that are dealt with are: (i) a general description; (ii) main features of its farming; and (iii) performance.

Key words: Fauve de Bourgogne, origin, description, performance.

RESUME – "Fauve de Bourgogne (France)". Cet article présente une description de la race française Fauve de Bourgogne. Les éléments suivants ont fait l'objet d'études : (i) une description générale ; (ii) le climat et les principales caractéristiques d'élevage ; et (iii) les performances.

Mots-clés : Fauve de Bourgogne, origine, description, performances.

The information given below, concerning the general description, pattern and performances, comes from the answer to a questionnaire aiming to get information about the history, morphology, importance and basic performances of the European breeds of rabbits. The questionnaire was designed, distributed, and collected within the European project RESGEN CT95-060 (Bolet *et al.*, 2000). The other data come, also, from a report of the same project (Bolet *et al.*, 2000) and are the results of an experiment, trying to evaluate the zootechnical characteristics of several breeds including the Fauve de Bourgogne, using as control of reference the strain INRA9077.

1. Breed name

- (i) Fauve de Bourgogne.
- (ii) *Breed name synonyms:* Burgunder.

2. General description

2.1. Population data

2.1.1. Population size and census data

- (i) Total number of females being used in purebreeding: 9200.
- (ii) This breed is sometimes crossed with New Zealand White, Californian and other breeds.
- (iii) The numbers of breeders raising this breed is estimated at 1135 and the breed is used in purebreeding.

2.1.2. Origin of the breed

This breed comes from selection of fawn rabbits in the local population of Burgundy. It was recognised as a breed on 14 January 1928. This breed is very cosmopolitan and has been diffused practically all over the world.

2.1.3. Situation with regard to danger of extinction

No danger, the breed is increasing its census number.

2.1.4. *Conservation programme: yes*

There is a programme of frozen semen and embryos, conducted in the framework of RESGEN by INRA and FFC (Fédération Française de Cuniculture).

2.2. Use of the breed in a descending order of product importance

Meat, fur and skin.

2.3. Colour

Fawn.

2.4. General type

2.4.1. *Body parts*

Middle size breed. Massy and chubby body. Imperceptible neck. Shoulders at the same level as the rump that is a little raised. Dewlap possible in the does.

2.4.2. *Head: convex*

2.4.3. *Ears: erect*

2.4.4. *Feet and legs: short*

2.5. Basic temperament (for males and females): relative vitality

3. Pattern

3.1. Main features of farming

3.1.1. *Socio-management system*

There are several types since very professional to family farming. Rabbits of this breed are also kept as pets.

3.1.2. *Housing*

It is common to raise this breed in cages with straw in outdoor or semi-open air rabbitries.

4. Performance

4.1. Reproduction (Tables 1 and 2)

Table 1. Information of sexual maturity

Trait	Mean
Age of buck at first service (months)	8-9
Age of doe at first mating (months)	6-7

Table 2. Fecundity traits

Trait	Mean	Range
Total born per litter	9	6-14
Born alive per litter	8	5-13
Litter size at weaning	8	7-9

4.2. Post-weaning daily gain

The growth rate between weaning and 11-12 weeks of age has been estimated at 36 g/d, lower than the corresponding figure for the control strain. The growth rate has a trend to decrease with the age of lower intensity than in the control.

4.3. Carcass and meat quality traits

Table 3 shows the estimated values of several carcass traits of the breed Fauve de Bourgogne and the corresponding ones of the control strain INRA9077. There are significant differences in live weight at 80 days and fat depots that in Fauve de Bourgogne are lower than in the control.

Table 3. Carcass traits of Fauve de Bourgogne (FV) and INRA9077 (CS)

Trait	FV	CS
Slaughter age (days)	80	80
Slaughter weight (g)	2622	2755
Hot dressing (%)	63.2	61.6
Liver (%)	5.52	5.75
Perirenal fat (%)	2.58	3.21
Scapular fat (%)	0.48	0.99
Head (%)	7.4	7.6
Meat/bone ratio (hind leg)	5.19	5.46
pH <i>Longissimus dorsi</i>	5.99	6.01
pH <i>Biceps femoris</i>	6.12	6.15

The traits related with the quality of meat are shown in Table 4, all of them measured in a sample of *Longissimus dorsi*, stored at -20°C . The samples were thawed and tenderness (raw shear force, RWB) and colour [L (lightness), a (redness) and b (amount of yellow) parameters] were recorded in raw and cooked meat. The percentage of type I fibres (slow twitch) in the muscle mentioned before are also given. The complement to 100 corresponds to type II fibres (fast twitch).

The only significant difference for the traits reported in Table 4 between Fauve de Bourgogne and INRA9077 refers to the colour parameter measuring the amount of yellow in cooked meat that is lower in the control strain.

The responses to the questionnaire cited at the beginning qualify the meat of the Fauve de Bourgogne as redder than in other rabbit breeds, of a good quality with a flavour resembling parsley.

Table 4. Meat quality traits of Fauve de Bourgogne (FV) and INRA9077 (CS)

Trait	FV	CS
Type I fibres at 11 weeks (%)	4.81	4.96
Type I fibres at 12 weeks (%)	5.34	4.76
Thaw loss (%)	7.95	8.70
Cooking loss (%)	22.90	23.78
RWB (raw meat)	16.07	15.88
RWB (cooked meat)	26.33	25.45
L_raw	59.68	59.39
a_raw	5.74	4.93
b_raw	15.07	14.44
L_cooked	77.66	77.34
a_cooked	1.23	1.40
b_cooked	14.93	15.23

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