

<sup>1</sup>Department of Poultry Science,  
Bangladesh Agricultural University,  
Bangladesh

<sup>2</sup>Graduate Training Institute, Bangladesh  
Agricultural University, Bangladesh

<sup>3</sup>Department of Animal Science,  
Bangladesh Agricultural University,  
Bangladesh

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**\*Corresponding author:**

MS Ali

E- mail: [mdshawkatali.ps@bau.edu.bd](mailto:mdshawkatali.ps@bau.edu.bd)

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**Research Article**

## Comparison of meat yield and quality characteristics between pigeon and quail

M Muraduzzaman<sup>1</sup>, M Ahammed<sup>1</sup>, M. Habib<sup>2</sup>, MAK Azad<sup>3</sup>, MA Hashem<sup>3</sup> and MS Ali<sup>1\*</sup>

**Abstract**

A respective number of pigeon and quail were purchased from Churkhai Bazar, Mymensingh at their marketing weight to compare their yield and quality characteristics of meat. The birds were then slaughtered and the meat yield characteristics were compared against their live weight. The samples of breast, thigh and drumstick kept at 4°C for 24 hours. Findings reveal that thigh, drumstick, breast, head, liver, gizzard, heart, neck and shank% were significantly higher in quail meat compare to pigeon but feather and skin% were significantly higher in pigeon. No differences were found in dressing percentage, blood weight and wing weight % between pigeon and quail. Pigeon meat expressed higher ether extract values compared to quail meat. Significantly higher pH of breast and thigh was found in quail compare to pigeon. Cooking loss was significantly higher in pigeon breast compare to quail breast but no differences found in thigh of both species. Drip loss% had no variation in pigeon meat and quail meat. Water holding capacity% was significantly higher in pigeon breast compare to quail breast but no variation in thigh of both species. L\* was significantly higher in pigeon breast, thigh and drumstick at 2 hours and in drumstick at 24 hours of postmortem compare to quail. Redness (a\*) was significantly higher in pigeon drumstick at 24 hours of postmortem than quail. There was no variation of a\* in breast, thigh and drumstick at 2 hours and in breast and thigh at 24 hours after postmortem of both species. There was no variation of b\* of breast, thigh and drumstick at 2 hours and 24 hours after postmortem in both pigeon and quail. In conclusion, pigeon meat is better due to have higher breast meat fat content and WHC as compared to quail meat.

**Introduction**

Poultry meats are widely available in Bangladesh. It meets the animal protein. Of all types of meat consumed in the world, chicken continues to be the cheapest and its consumption is expected to increase by 34% by 2018 (Jung et al., 2011). Fast growing commercial broiler strains & few indigenous chicken breeds fulfill the demand of chicken meat over the years (Akhter et al., 2022; Ali et al. 2022; Azad et al., 2021 and 2022; Jaturashitha et al., 2008). This increase can be adduced to the fact that poultry meat is cheaper with good nutritional quality, easy to prepare and it is well suited for quick menus. But now-a-days, for various reason people are searching alternative to chicken meat. As a result of increasing per capita income in Bangladesh, people want more variation in meat consumption. From this aspect quail meat & pigeon meat may be the best alternative. Quail attains maturity and come to first lay between 5-6 weeks of age and produce 200-300 eggs in their first year of lay (Bagh et al., 2016). Japanese quail also known as common quails is mainly raised for meat and egg production. It attains a market weight of 140-180g between 5-8 weeks of age. Pigeon is hardy and less susceptible to many diseases of poultry birds. They are gentle, strong and swift flier. Pigeon is easy to raise and requires fewer capital outlays in terms of housing, management and health care. Consumers' acceptance of pigeon and quail meat depends on its quality, which is influenced by a number of factors ranging from physical and chemical properties and processing and handling of meat (Alvarado and Sams, 2004). Modern consumers seek meat that is low fat, tender, juicy with good flavor and aroma (Bithi et al., 2020; Boby et al., 2021; Das et al., 2022; Disha et al., 2020; Dyubele et al., 2010). Carcass characteristics of various breeds and strains of poultry have been extensively studied (Becker et al., 1984; Orr and Hunt, 1984; Li et al., 2006). Those studied have emphasized comparisons at a set point of time. Chronological age as a standard for comparison has been a commonly acceptable method to examine differences in growth and carcass characteristics (Chambers, 1990). However, for strains or breeds known to have large disparity in growth pattern and mature body weight, comparison at marketing weight of different poultry species might be a better measure than age.

Data regarding meat yield and quality characteristics comparing pigeon and quail of Bangladesh are scanty. Therefore, the objective of the present research is to compare the meat yield characteristics and meat quality parameters between pigeon and quail at marketing weight.

**Materials and Methods**

Total 10 birds (5 pigeons and 5 quails) were purchased randomly irrespective of sex at their marketing weight from Churkhai Bazar, Mymensingh Sadar, Mymensingh. The approximate marketing weight of pigeon and quail was 220±10g and 140±10g respectively. The live birds were

immediately transferred to Bangladesh Agricultural University Poultry Farm. Then all the birds were weighted before slaughter and were slaughtered (slaughter was done by cutting jugular veins with the help of a sharp knife), bled, plucked, weighted to determine blood and feather loss. The carcass was eviscerated and dissected manually. Each eviscerated carcass was dissected into neck, wings, breast, thigh, drumstick and the remainder of the carcass. The dissected carcass components were weighed accurately using digital weighing balance. Meat samples (breast, thigh and drumstick) were collected from the slaughtered birds. After that instrumental color (CIE  $L^* a^* b^*$ ) was taken from breast, thigh and drumstick meat samples at 2 hours of postmortem. Then the meat samples were stored for 24 hours at 4°C temperature in the refrigerator. After refrigerating for 24 hours the breast, thigh and drumstick meat samples were analyzed for proximate composition, pH, color, water holding capacity, cooking loss and drip loss.

#### Proximate composition of Pigeon and Quail meat

Four samples (two breasts and two thighs) from quails and four samples (two breast and two thigh) from pigeons were analyzed for Dry mater, Crude Protein, Ether Extract and Ash by the standard procedures of AOAC (2005).

#### Physicochemical Properties of Pigeon meat and Quail meat

##### pH measurement

In this study, the pH was taken from the pigeon and quail after 24 hours of slaughtering. After 24 hours of slaughtering, the pH of breast (pectoralis major muscle) and leg (thigh muscle) was measured with the help of an automatic pH meter (model 210, HANNA).

##### Color

Instrumental color (CIE  $L^* a^* b^*$ ) was taken from breast, thigh and drumstick meat samples at 2 hours of postmortem. Then the meat samples were refrigerated for 24 hours at 4°C temperature and the color of breast, thigh and drumstick meat was individually measured using Konica Chroma Meters CR-410 (Konica Minolta Inc., Tokyo, Japan).

##### Cooking loss

To evaluate the cooking loss of the breast and thigh meat samples were weighted. The samples were put in a polythene bag and placed in a water bath at 80°C for 30 minutes. After that the samples were removed from the water bath and kept for 30 minutes in a room temperature (Ali et al., 2007). Cooking loss was calculated by expressing cooked sample weight as a percentage of precooked samples weight.

$$\text{Cooking loss (\%)} = [(\text{Initial wt}-\text{cooked wt}) / (\text{Initial wt})] \times 100$$

##### Drip loss

Drip loss was determined on the samples of breast (pectoralis major muscle). Sample was weighed with the help of digital weighing balance and placed separately in a pot to allow meat juice to drain out. To prevent contact between the draining juice and the meat sample, special care has been taken during placing the sample into the pot. The samples were then kept in a refrigerator and stored at 4°C for 24 hours. After that time, the meat samples were reweighed. Drip loss was calculated from the difference in weight before and after chilling and expressed in percent.

$$\text{Drip loss (\%)} = [(\text{Initial wt.}-\text{chilled wt.}) / (\text{Initial wt.})] \times 100$$

##### Water Holding Capacity

The Water Holding Capacity of breast and thigh were measured by centrifugation assay. About 1g breast and 1g thigh sample were cut into cubes from each replication and kept in a centrifuge tube and then centrifuged at 10000 RCF at 4°C for 10 minutes. WHC was determined by the amount of exudate water via the following formula:

$$\text{WHC (\%)} = \frac{\text{Sample weight after centrifugation}}{\text{Sample weight before centrifugation}} \times 100$$

##### Statistical analysis:

In this experiment the data were analyzed by t-test using Statistical Analysis Systems Institute (SAS, 2002).

## Results and Discussion

### Meat Yield Characteristics

The data obtained from this experiment are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Meat Yield Characteristics of Pigeon and Quail

| Parameter          | Pigeon      | Quail      | P value |
|--------------------|-------------|------------|---------|
|                    | Mean + SEM  | Mean + SEM |         |
| Live weight (g)    | 226.00±3.74 | 145±3.79   | 0.0001  |
| Dressing (%)       | 68.12±0.88  | 71.87±1.82 | 0.1010  |
| Blood (%)          | 4.88±0.46   | 4.11±0.41  | 0.2524  |
| Feather + Skin (%) | 5.75±0.40   | 1.38±0.03  | 0.0001  |
| Thigh (%)          | 12.37±0.43  | 22.12±0.57 | 0.0001  |
| Drumstick (%)      | 10.24±0.57  | 19.36±0.52 | 0.0001  |
| Breast (%)         | 21.26±0.96  | 26.89±0.67 | 0.0014  |
| Wing (%)           | 19.45±0.59  | 19.37±1.04 | 0.9514  |
| Head (%)           | 7.59±0.35   | 11.86±0.17 | 0.0001  |
| Liver (%)          | 6.01±0.27   | 9.94±0.51  | 0.0001  |
| Gizzard (%)        | 5.65±0.41   | 9.37±0.14  | 0.0001  |
| Heart (%)          | 4.41±0.34   | 8.01±0.33  | 0.0001  |
| Neck (%)           | 5.86±0.45   | 8.55±0.22  | 0.0007  |
| Shank (%)          | 5.47±0.25   | 8.60±0.51  | 0.0006  |

Data are Mean ± SEM.

The data obtained from this experiment indicate that there were significant variations in almost all parameter. Feather and skin were significantly higher in pigeon meat compare to quail meat ( $p < 0.01$ ), while thigh%, drumstick%, breast%, head%, liver%, gizzard%, heart%, neck% and shank% were significantly higher in quail compare to pigeon ( $p < 0.01$ ). No significant differences were found ( $p > 0.05$ ) in dressing%, blood%, wing% of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ). Omojola et al. (2007) reported that dressing%, breast%, thigh%, drumstick%, wing% of pigeon 65.15, 38.3, 6.35, 5.65, 19.20, respectively. In this study dressing% and wing% of pigeon are similar with that report but others parameters are higher. Hasan et al. (2016) reported that head%, heart%, liver%, gizzard% and shank% of pigeon at market weight were 4.94, 1.09, 8.96, 5.19, 1.84 respectively. In this study gizzard% is similar, liver% is lower but others parameters are higher than that report. Abang et al. (2017) reported that dressing%, head%, neck%, breast% and drumstick% of quail 70.74, 5.77, 5.87, 22.35 and 17.34 respectively. In this study breast%, dressing% and drumstick% are closely similar with that report while others parameters are higher.

### Proximate Analysis

The values of proximate components of breast and thigh of pigeon and quail are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Proximate Composition of Breast and Thigh of Pigeon and Quail

| Meat type | Parameter     | Pigeon     | Quail      | P value |
|-----------|---------------|------------|------------|---------|
|           |               | Mean±SEM   | Mean±SEM   |         |
| Breast    | Dry Matter    | 25.10±0.49 | 27.27±2.50 | 0.4851  |
|           | Moisture      | 74.89±0.49 | 72.73±2.50 | 0.4851  |
|           | Ash           | 1.29±0.04  | 1.38±0.01  | 0.2064  |
|           | Crude Protein | 19.18±1.23 | 24.40±5.08 | 0.4237  |
|           | Ether Extract | 3.47±0.07  | 1.86±0.01  | 0.0022  |
| Thigh     | Dry Matter    | 24.38±1.58 | 31.14±0.59 | 0.0570  |
|           | Moisture      | 75.62±1.58 | 68.85±0.59 | 0.0570  |
|           | Ash           | 1.9±0.02   | 1.24±0.02  | 0.2869  |
|           | Crude Protein | 21.82±1.09 | 20.55±1.64 | 0.5865  |
|           | Ether Extract | 4.15±0.15  | 3.75±0.25  | 0.3037  |

Data are Mean ± SEM

The data obtained from this experiment indicate that significantly higher ether extract in pigeon breast compare to quail breast meat ( $p < 0.01$ ). No variations were found in dry matter, moisture, crude protein and ash of breast and thigh meat of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ).

### Dry Matter

The dry matter content of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 2. The overall observed dry matter content at pigeon breast and thigh meat were 25.10% and 24.38% respectively. On the other hand, dry matter of quail in breast and thigh were 27.27% and 31.14% respectively. Dry matter of Breast and thigh meat had no variation ( $p > 0.05$ ). Hossain et al. (1994) stated that dry matter of pigeon meat ranges from 26-28%. This research result is closely related with that. Genchev et al. (2008) reported that dry matter of quail ranges from 30-32%. This research result is similar with that.

### Crude Protein

The CP content of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 2. The observed CP content at pigeon breast and thigh were 19.18% and 21.82% respectively whereas CP content of quail breast and thigh were 24.40% and 20.55% respectively. There was no variation ( $p > 0.05$ ) of CP in breast and thigh meat of both species. Jahanian and Edriss (2015) reported that CP% of quail ranges from 22-24% which agreed my present research work. Apata et al. (2015) stated that CP% in pigeon meat ranges from 19-20% which agree my research result.

### Ether Extract

The ether extract content of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 2. The ether extract content at breast in pigeon was 3.47% and at thigh in pigeon was 4.15%. On the other hand, EE at breast and thigh in quail meat were 1.86% and 3.75% respectively. Results showed that ether extract was significantly higher in pigeon breast meat compare to quail breast meat ( $p < 0.01$ ) while no variation was found in thigh meat of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ). Bostami et al. (2021) showed that EE% of pigeon 6.41% which is higher than my present research work. Fakolade (2015) reported that EE% of breast and thigh meat of quail were 3.4% and 4.00% respectively whereas this research reported 1.86% and 3.75% respectively which is less than that report.

### Ash

The ash content of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 2. The observed ash content at breast and thigh of pigeon meat was 1.29% and 1.9% respectively. The ash content of breast and thigh in quail meat was 1.38% and 1.24% respectively. There was no variation of ash content between pigeon and quail ( $p > 0.05$ ). Pomianowski et al. (2009) reported that ash content of breast and thigh meat of pigeon 1.48% and 1.36% respectively. In my research work ash content of breast was less and thigh was higher than that report. Boni et al. (2010) stated that ash content of quail was 1.44%. My research work value was almost similar with that statement.

### pH

pH of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 3. The observed pH at breast and thigh of pigeon meat was 6.09 and 6.36 respectively. pH of breast and thigh in quail were 6.26 and 6.89 respectively. Significantly higher pH was found in quail breast and thigh compare to pigeon breast and thigh ( $p < 0.01$ ). Apata et al. (2014) stated that pH of pigeon meat 6.86 whereas my research showed less than that. Genchev et al. (2008) reported that pH of quail breast 6.17 which agree my research work.

**Table 3:** pH (after 24 hours of postmortem) of breast and thigh from Pigeon and Quail

| Meat type | Pigeon     | Quail      | P value |
|-----------|------------|------------|---------|
|           | Mean ± SEM | Mean ± SEM |         |
| Breast    | 6.09±0.00  | 6.26±0.30  | 0.0006  |
| Thigh     | 6.36±0.05  | 6.89±0.04  | 0.0001  |

Data are Mean ± SEM.

#### Cooking loss, drip loss and water holding capacity

The cooking loss of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 4. The overall observed cooking loss at breast and thigh of pigeon meat 32.46% and 23.74% respectively. On the other hand, cooking loss of breast and thigh of quail were 21.53% and 19.53% respectively. Significantly higher cooking loss was found in pigeon breast meat compare to quail breast meat ( $p < 0.01$ ) while no variation was found in thigh meat of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ). Omojola et al. (2012) stated that cooking loss of pigeon breast meat 28.74% which is slightly lower than my research work. Karakaya et al. (2005) stated that cooking loss of quail meat 24.9% which is higher than my present study.

The drip loss of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 4. The overall drip loss at breast meat of pigeon is 3.02% and breast meat of quail is 2.99%. There was no variation of drip loss in breast meat between two species ( $p > 0.05$ ). Awan et al. (2017) stated that drip loss in quail ranges from 1.84-3.98% which agreed my result. Apata et al. (2015) reported that drip loss of pigeon meat is 4.65% which is higher than my present work. Water holding capacity of pigeon and quail is shown in Table 4. Water holding capacity at breast and thigh of pigeon meat is 98.01% and 97.82% respectively. On the other hand, water holding capacity at breast and thigh meat of quail is 96.65% and 99.06% respectively. Significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) water holding capacity of breast meat was found in pigeon compare to quail breast meat ( $p < 0.05$ ). No variation was found in thigh meat of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ).

**Table 4:** Cooking, drip loss and water holding capacity of breast and thigh from Pigeon and Quail

| Meat type | Parameter                  | Pigeon     | Quail      | P value |
|-----------|----------------------------|------------|------------|---------|
|           |                            | Mean ± SEM | Mean ± SEM |         |
| Breast    | Cooking loss (%)           | 32.46±0.12 | 21.53±0.23 | 0.0006  |
|           | Drip loss (%)              | 3.02±0.62  | 2.99±0.08  | 0.9664  |
|           | Water holding capacity (%) | 98.01±0.02 | 96.65±0.18 | 0.0173  |
| Thigh     | Cooking loss (%)           | 23.74±0.64 | 19.53±2.25 | 0.2147  |
|           | Water holding capacity (%) | 97.82±0.88 | 99.06±0.53 | 0.3528  |

Data are Mean ± SEM.

#### Color

The value of L\*(lightness) of breast of pigeon and quail with hour of time interval (2 hours and 24 hours after post mortem) are shown in Table 5. The observed value of L\* at breast of pigeon were 59.83 (2 hours) and 44.90 (24 hours) and in quail were 41.54 (2 hours) and 45.49 (24 hours). Significantly higher lightness in pigeon breast at 2 hours compare to quail breast ( $p < 0.05$ ) but no variation at 24 hours in pigeon and quail ( $p > 0.05$ ). Value of L\* at thigh of pigeon was 51.00 (2 hours) and 57.58 (24 hours) and of quail was 36.04 (2 hours) and 44.18 (24 hours). Significantly higher L\* in pigeon thigh was found at 2 hours of postmortem compare to quail thigh ( $p < 0.05$ ) but no variation of thigh at 24 hours of postmortem of both species ( $p > 0.05$ ). Value of L\* at drumstick of pigeon was 59.45 (2 hours) and 52.35 (24 hour) and of quail was 46.06 (2 hours) and 40.86 (24 hours). Significantly higher lightness was found in pigeon drumstick at 2 and 24 hours of postmortem compare to quail drumstick ( $p < 0.05$ ). L\* value is deteriorated which is supported by Fletcher (1999).

**Table 5.** The color (CIE L\*, a\*, b\*) values of breast, thigh and drumstick (with skin) of Pigeon and Quail (after 2hours and 24 hours of post mortem)

| Time                      | Meat type | Color value (CIE) | Pigeon     | Quail      | P value |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------------|------------|------------|---------|
|                           |           |                   | Mean ± SEM | Mean ± SEM |         |
| 2 hours after postmortem  | Breast    | L*                | 59.83±4.01 | 41.54±4.12 | 0.0130  |
|                           |           | a*                | 12.31±2.87 | 12.46±1.03 | 0.9621  |
|                           |           | b*                | 10.56±4.50 | 6.45±1.09  | 0.4017  |
|                           | Thigh     | L*                | 51.00±3.47 | 36.04±4.35 | 0.0277  |
|                           |           | a*                | 9.21±0.40  | 10.52±1.43 | 0.4060  |
|                           |           | b*                | 14.14±3.38 | 7.72±0.84  | 0.1033  |
|                           | Drumstick | L*                | 59.45±4.07 | 46.06±2.48 | 0.0230  |
|                           |           | a*                | 9.37±2.28  | 9.89±1.30  | 0.8467  |
|                           |           | b*                | 7.96±1.49  | 7.26±1.05  | 0.7097  |
| 24 hours after postmortem | Breast    | L*                | 44.90±7.60 | 45.49±2.87 | 0.9439  |
|                           |           | a*                | 7.53±1.13  | 10.93±1.23 | 0.0770  |
|                           |           | b*                | 8.38±4.73  | 8.73±1.72  | 0.9457  |
|                           | Thigh     | L*                | 57.58±5.97 | 44.18±2.94 | 0.0791  |
|                           |           | a*                | 8.25±1.29  | 7.93±0.75  | 0.8334  |
|                           |           | b*                | 21.12±7.07 | 7.09±1.36  | 0.0874  |
|                           | Drumstick | L*                | 52.35±3.97 | 40.86±1.14 | 0.0241  |
|                           |           | a*                | 9.99±1.08  | 3.88±1.31  | 0.0072  |
|                           |           | b*                | 9.32±1.08  | 5.20±2.19  | 0.1309  |

Data are Mean ± SEM.

The value of  $a^*$  (redness) at breast of pigeon and quail with hour of time interval (2 hours and 24 hours after post mortem) are shown in Table 5. The observed value of  $a^*$  at breast of pigeon was 12.31 (2 hours) and 7.53 (24 hours) and of quail was 12.46 (2 hours) and 10.93 (24 hours). There was no variation of  $a^*$  in breast at 2 hours and 24 hours after postmortem in both species ( $p>0.05$ ). This result is supported by Ngoka and Froning (1982). Value of  $a^*$  of thigh of pigeon was 9.21 (2 hours) and 8.25 (24 hours) and of quail was 10.52 (2 hours) and 7.93 (24 hours). There was no variation of  $a^*$  in thigh at 2 hours and 24 hours after postmortem of both species ( $p>0.05$ ).  $a^*$  value is deteriorated with the increase of storage time. Same report was submitted by Ngoka and Froning (1982). Value of  $a^*$  at drumstick of pigeon was 9.37 (2 hours of postmortem) and 9.99 (24 hours of postmortem) and of quail was 9.89 (2 hours of postmortem) and 3.88 (24 hours of postmortem). Significantly higher redness in pigeon drumstick at 24 hours of postmortem compare to quail drumstick ( $p<0.01$ ) but no variation was found at 2 hours of postmortem in both species ( $p>0.05$ ). The value of  $b^*$  (yellowness) at breast of pigeon and quail with hour of time interval (2 hours and 24 hours after post mortem) are shown in table 5. The observed value  $b^*$  of breast of pigeon was 10.56 (2 hours) and 8.38 (24 hours) and of quail was 6.45 (2 hours) and 8.73 (24 hours). There was no variation of  $b^*$  in breast at 2 hours and 24 hours of postmortem in both species ( $p>0.05$ ). Value of  $b^*$  of thigh of pigeon was 14.14 (2 hours) and 21.12 (24 hours) and of quail was 7.72 (2 hours of postmortem) 7.09 (24 hours of postmortem). There was no variation of  $b^*$  in thigh at 2 hours and 24 hours of postmortem in pigeon and quail ( $p>0.05$ ). Value of  $b^*$  of drumstick of pigeon was 7.96 (2 hours of postmortem) and 9.32 (24 hours of postmortem) and of quail was 7.26 (2 hours of postmortem) and 5.20 (24 hours of postmortem). There was no variation of  $b^*$  of drumstick at 2 and 24 hours of postmortem in both species ( $p>0.05$ ).

## Conclusion

Between two types of meat, significantly higher fat% was observed in pigeon breast meat compare to quail breast meat. Cooking loss and water holding capacity were significantly higher in pigeon breast meat and drip loss had no variation in pigeon and quail breast meat.

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