

## BEEF MEAT PRODUCTION AND QUILITY OF THE LITHUANIAN RED CATTLE AND THEIR HYBRIDS

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**Summary.** Tests were carried out with the Red Lithuanian cattle and their hybrids with the cattle of Limousine, Charolais and Hereford breeds. Tests showed that compared to pure-blooded young bulls, hybrids used 7,7 – 10,8% less fodder for every kilogram of increased weight. Charolais hybrids had the biggest body mass. 15 months age Charolais, Hereford and Limousine hybrids exceeded in their weight the pure-blooded red Lithuania's young bulls by 7,1%, 6,5% and 4,5% respectively. Control slaughters indicated the biggest carcass mass for Charolais hybrids, which was 37,3 kg, or 16,1 % bigger than the carcass mass of the pure-blooded red young bulls. Carcass mass of Limousine and Hereford hybrids was 32,5 – 23,1 kg, or 13,9 – 9,9 % bigger than the carcass mass of the pure-blooded cattle. The highest carcass output was marked for Charolais hybrids – 57,4 %. Carcass yield of Hereford hybrids (54,2 %) and Limousine hybrids (57,2 %) also exceeded carcass output of pure-blooded red Lithuanian cattle, which was 52,5 %. After carcass deboning there was indicated that output of edible parts of hybrids was 1,5 – 3,2 % higher than the same output of the pure-blooded young bulls. Chemical beef analysis showed the highest protein content in the meat of Charolais hybrids (20,82%) and the lowest - in the meat of the pure-blooded red Lithuania's young bulls (19,74%). All the hybrids were marked with slightly higher beef protein content, compared to the pure-blooded young bulls, though differences were not large here. Fat content was similar in the meat of all compared cattle. Meat of the hybrids was softer (2 - 3%) and had better water bindeness (2 - 4%), compared to the meat of the pure-blooded cattle. Protein value (tryptophane/hydroxiprolin content) was also slightly better of the hybrids, compared to the pure-blooded young bulls.

**Keywords:** cattle, crossing, quality of meat, hybrids, Charolais, Limousine, Hereford