

Poultry Fortune

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Family Poultry: Post COVID livelihood opportunity in Rural India

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Highlight Points

COVID pandemic badly impacted livelihood, employment and economy of the country. Family poultry, an option to improve the household situation. It needs low investment and gives good return; has local production and consumption value chain and helpful to meet the household need and family labour utilization. Government along with many other agencies also promote backyard poultry through various schemes. There are many native as well as improved poultry varieties which can be reared from extensive to small scale intensive system in profitable manner.

COVID-19 pandemic had a trickle-down effect on Indian economy affecting all the sectors except Agriculture which recorded positive trend. There was fall in household's income; high rate of inflation, unemployment, job losses created an all-time low employment index and ultimately lead to the drastic fall in GDP. The poultry sector also found massive impact but backyard poultry/ family poultry was little affected due to local production and local market consumption compared to the commercial poultry industry.

Family poultry covers wide variety of small-scale poultry production systems in rural, urban and peri-urban areas. There is minimal investment on inputs and labour is mainly family members. This system is good for food security, income and employment generation. FAO classified family poultry production system into four broad categories: small extensive scavenging (1-5 poultry); extensive scavenging (5-50); semi-intensive (50-200) and small-scale intensive (Broiler more than 200 or layer more than 100).

India has registered about 46% growth in backyard poultry compared to 4.5% of commercial poultry in the year 2019 (DADF, 2020). Backyard poultry contributes about 17.8% of the total egg production of India. There is huge difference between production and requirement of poultry produce in India especially in non-producing states, rural and tribal areas of the country. Presently, per capita availability of egg is 91

(Economic Survey, 2021-22) and meat is about 3.4 kg (DAHD, 2019) which are far below the ICMR recommendation of 180 eggs and 11kg of meat per person/ year. According to a report by McKinsey and company, the per capita chicken consumption is set to grow to 9.1 Kg by 2030, on account of rapidly changing consumption behavior of individuals. Share of poultry and other meat in household food consumption is expected to grow from 12 to 24 per cent by 2030, if so, the poultry sector should grow many folds to meet the projected requirements. It offers a huge opportunity and scope to enhance the poultry productivity and production. An estimate made by Government of India in 2012 clearly brought out the potential of poultry sector in generating employment, an increase in 50 g of chicken meat and one egg per capita may generate about 25,000 additional employment opportunities. Backyard poultry sector is providing livelihoods, nutritional security, employment, women empowerment etc. Reverse migration in rural India creates lot of financial as well as social issues in the society. Some of them have returned to their work but many of them still looking for their livelihood based on agricultural and allied sector activity and The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MANREGA) has come to the rescue of the rural employment last few years when the number of man-days of employment generated increased by almost 50%. But, people cannot get job round the year under this scheme. The land availability per household is reduced due to fragmentation and not able to sustain the livelihood of family on it. Prevailing situation can be addressed by introduction of backyard poultry among landless, marginal and small farmers in Rural India.

The rural backyard poultry systems play an important role in achieving nutritional security, income generation and livelihood option of the person in rural areas. In village poultry systems the production of poultry meat and eggs is extremely efficient in terms of feed and water inputs. The nutritious eggs and chicken meat can supplement household grain-based diets and fulfill the protein requirements to a large extent. The backyard poultry have a special place in the ecosystem as they are under the control of women, require low investment, assist in pest control and provide

manure for fertilizer. Improvements in their production can meet the nutritional demand in the household and in the community by increasing their social standing and financial autonomy.

Why family poultry?

1. Poultry farming is one of the fast growing agri-sector in our country with an annual cumulative growth rate of about 9.6% in broiler meat and 6-7% in egg production.
2. Poultry produce is the cheapest animal protein source
3. Least investment compare to other livestock
4. Easy to rear
5. Reared on zero-input to intensive method
6. Easy availability of chicks and other inputs
7. Extension and Advisory services are easily available
8. Produce can be used as household consumption as well as for sale also

9. Easy marketing as few numbers
10. Native birds have better immunity compared to commercial birds
11. Return start in short time interval and regular source of income

Selection of poultry birds

There are 19 recognized breeds of chicken found in different parts of the country. Farmers can select these birds and they can also go for improved varieties of chicken like Vanaraja, Gramapriya, Srinidhi etc. The list of improved varieties and their purpose of rearing is provided in the Table. Vanashree, Krishibro, Krishilayer, Pratapdhan, Narmadanidhi, Kamrupa, Jharism, Himsamridhi, Chabro, Kalinga Brown, Kaveri, CARI-Gold, Hitcari, Upcari, Cari-Debendra, Giriraja, Girirani, Krishipriya, Swarnadhara, Nandanam 99 and Rajasri etc. Main criteria of selection is market demand and suitability of birds in the local condition.

Table 1. Some of the popular crossbred varieties developed in India for backyard poultry farming

Variety	Purpose	Plumage	Institution
Vanaraja	Dual	Brown, Black with black glossy tail feathers	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Gramapriya	Egg	Brown plumage	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Srinidhi	Dual	Multicolored with barred plumage	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Janapriya	Dual	Brown	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Krishibro	Broiler	Multicolored with barring	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Krishilayer	Layer	White	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
Giriraja	Dual	Multicoloured	UAS, Benaglure
Kuroiler	Dual	Thick reddish brown and barred feathers	Keg Forms, Gurugram, Haryana
Rainbow Rooster	Dual	Brownish red	Indbro, Hyderabad
Nandanam	Dual		TANVASU, Chennai
Rajashri	Egg	Brown	PVNRTVU, Hyd
Pratapdhan	Dual	Brown, whitish yellow feathers	AICRP on PB, MPUAT, Udaipur
Narmadanidhi	Dual	Black with whitish silk feathers	AICRP on PB, NDVSU, Jabalpur
Kamrupa	Dual	Brown and black	AICRP on PB, AAU, Guwahati
Jharsim	Dual	Multicoloured	AICRP on PB, BAU, Ranchi
Himsamridhi	Dual	Brown	AICRP on PB, CSKHPKV, Palampur
CARI Nirbheek	Egg	Brown	ICAR-CARI, Izatnagar, UP
Up-CARI	Egg	Brown frizzle feathers	ICAR-CARI, Izatnagar, UP
CARI-Shyama	Egg	Black with silky white feathers	ICAR-CARI, Izatnagar, UP

Management system of Backyard Poultry

Backyard poultry is low or zero input activity requires little feed supplement, night shelter and minimum health care support. They also reared on household waste, green fodder, insects, earthworm and small amount of supplemented feed. There are two phases of rearing of Rural birds: i. Nursery rearing: chicks to 4-6 weeks of age; ii. Free-range rearing: birds (after 4-6 weeks) able to sustain on scavenging and protect themselves from predator.

Family Support

Rural poultry is also called as family poultry because it is reared in family without much extra effort. Women, children and old aged person in a family can also contribute in poultry husbandry work without any risk.

Capacity Development of farmers

There are Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in each district of farmers, Veterinary Colleges, Universities and many other organizations like NGOs are imparting capacity development programme for poultry producers. They can also financially be supported by many governmental schemes to take up this farming as livelihood option.

Other poultry birds

In the Indian subcontinent, "Poultry Farming" is synonymous with "Chicken Farming" as the chicken is the most commonly reared poultry bird. Poultry include guineas, geese, chickens, ducks, pigeons, and turkeys. There are lot of other opportunities in poultry sector like: Chicken Hatchery, Duck Farming, Duck Farming With Integrated Fish Farming, Ostrich farming, Pigeon farming, Quails farming, Swan farming, Turkey farming etc.

Small scale intensive farming (broiler)

In this production system commercial variety of broiler can be purchased from any authorized hatchery (private or public sector) and can be reared at their farm. There are two types of system for small intensive farming: contract farming and private farming. There are many integrate in different parts of the country who offer to join their contract. Integrators give all input and you have to rear the birds at your farm with your manpower support. They will take all birds after few weeks as per contract. You can all take only day-old-chicks without any contract from integrator and can sale in open market. Both the production systems have some merit and demerits, and before going to business take advice from any expert available in your area.

Economics of poultry farming

Poultry farmers should select improved backyard varieties of birds which have local demand in the market. Many studies were conducted in different parts of the country on economics of different backyard chicken varieties. The economics of Vanaraja and Gramapriya in a traditional backyard system was estimated with the net profit per pair of birds in a year as Rs. 595-705 and 820-930, respectively. Farmers can rear more numbers of chicken based on land availability, other recourses, experience and market demand.

Government support in poultry farming

Different states have different types of schemes to support and promote poultry farming in rural areas. These are some important schemes which support poultry sector as well as other employment generation activities: MUDRA Loan,

NLM Scheme- Poultry Venture Capital Funds, NABARD Schemes, Heath support from Veterinary/Animal Husbandry Department. Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Caste (SC) farmers may also get support from many government organizations under Scheduled Tribe Component (STC) and Scheduled Caste Components (SSC) programme. There are many Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), State Agricultural University, Central Poultry Development Organizations (CPDO) and many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) supporting poultry farming through capacity development as well as by providing necessary input.

Conclusion

Backyard Poultry is one of the most important sources of nutritional security, income generation and livelihood opportunity. It can be started on very low investment and within short period of times there is regular income to support the household. Lakhs of unemployed rural person can start backyard poultry farming that can solve the issue of migration from rural to urban area in any distress condition. It has huge potential for further expansion as the produce of backyard system is preferred in all section of the society across the country.



Courtesy: NECC