

NATIVE CHICKEN FARMING PROVIDING SIGNIFICANT PROFIT —A SUCCESS STORY

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When the average income from agriculture dwindles due to natural disaster, lack of labours, it can be compensated by doing agriculture based secondary businesses. Goat rearing, poultry farming, cattle rearing, piggery, quail rearing, honeybee culture, silkworm culture, aquaculture, mushroom culture are some of the major farm businesses. Choosing the right kind of farm business based on the location of the farm, land and facilities available, water resources, one can definitely earn a significant profit from it. Here we share our success formula to all who are interested.

I, Jenil Karthik from Panayankurichi village, Agasthiarpatti on the road 12 kilometers from Ambasamudram reared native chickens and earned considerable profit from it, having interest in poultry and goat rearing and working as an Software Engineer in Bridgestone Americas, Liberia (West Africa). As I was interested in poultry business therefore I became a member of few WhatsApp groups and Facebook groups and people involve in poultry business, consulting with enthusiastic people of all ages to gather information about poultry rearing. Frequently, I used to discuss with the experts of Veterinary College and Research Institute, Tirunelveli and poultry business groups to clarify my doubts.

All this motivated me to establish a farm of 4.62 acres and constructed required structures and sheds. Then we gradually gathered mother 350 parent stocks of three varieties such as Siruvidai, Peruvidai and Idaivettu. There are chicks of different ages, from one-day old to sexually matured ones, about 2,500 in total.

We have constructed three sheds for mother hens, in 1,000 square feet area. Chicks from the age of one day to two months have eight sheds in 250 square feet area. Above two months of age, have eight sheds of 700 square feet area. For the birds of each shed, we have provided a separate foraging area which is separated by a fish net so to accommodate different age groups.

Sheds are also equipped with a ladder like structure, below the ceiling of the shed casuarina poles were hanged crisscrossing each other. The birds can approach the poles for perching climbing through the ladder. Generally country hens tend to perch on the tree branches. This can also helps the birds to escape away from the predators.

We don't sell the eggs. All the fertile eggs were incubated (300 to 600 eggs per week) in self assembled incubator about 75% chicks will hatch out from them and only 85% of them will survive and start growing in good condition without any diseases. The hatched out chicks of various age group (day old to three months) are sold out. A day old chick @ Rs 60/-. A one month old chick @ Rs 120/- and two months old chick @ Rs 200/-. These chicks were purchased by those who were interested to establish the poultry farm. Chicks of more than six months are sold for meat @ Rs 350/- per kg live weight.

ECONOMICS:

In a month, we can sell about

- 300 one-day old chicks can fetch Rs 18,000/- per month.

- 200, one-month old chicks we can get Rs 24,000/- per month.
- 250, two-month old chicks we can get Rs 50,000/- per month.
- By selling adult chickens and roosters we can get Rs 2,00,000/- per month.

Therefore, we make a total sales of Rs.2,92,000/- per month as income (increase or decrease by 25%). This average income we get regularly every month on the expenditure of
Rs 37,500/- labour charges
Rs 80,000/- fodder
Rs 15,000/- electricity
Rs 6,000/- medicines
Rs 15,000/- transport and other contingencies.
Total expenditure is Rs 1,53,000/-.
Deducting the expenditure, we get Rs 1,38,500/- every month as a profit. Every month, there will be a profit not less than Rs 1,00,000/.

Now we also conserve the pure breed of country chicken, procured from remote rural areas, and rear them in our farm. A tiny effort to protect our country chicken from extinction.

CARE FOR CHICKS:

We did not provide commercial feed to young ones for long time but shifted to alternative feeds sources such as rice, husk, green leaves, azolla which is gradually increased in the basal diet. And as soon as birds got accustomed to the new feed, the quantity can be increased further. Sudden change in feed will in occur loss.

We need to watch the birds behaviour closely and accordingly the temperature should be maintained. We can increase the brooder temperature, by lighting extra bulbs.

Providing fish waste without proper heat treatment will increase the incidence of mortality.



BROODING

If we allow the broody hen to incubate the eggs and chicks, then the hen will take care of the young ones till they become mature. Chicks which are incubated artificially require more care and maintenance to regulate their body temperature so there is need to be provide warmth artificially.

For this we have established a brooding unit to take care of chicks. Brooder is made of a tin sheet, made into a round confinement, with a circumference of 25 feet and with a height of 1 ½ feet. Accommodate 300 chicks of day old. Newspaper can be spread on the floor of the brooder and fill the floor with paddy husk, before introducing the chicks. On an average light bulb of one watt per chick were used to provide them adequate warmth. During peak winter season, we keep the chicks for about twenty days in the brooder. We also use 5 feeders, 5 drinkers, for 300 chicks which were cleaned daily. After hatch upto three days we provide them only palm jaggery water. Then we provide them commercially available feed exclusively prepared for country varieties.



FORAGING FROM THE AGE OF TWO MONTHS

From day 15, we provide them with moringa leaf, agathi (Sesbania) leaf and azolla. From day 20, they will be allowed to learn foraging in the farm. They will forage only within the confinements made of nets. After two months of age, they will be allowed to forage adlibitum.

Sheds were opened every day morning by 6.45 AM to 8 AM for the birds to forage. By 8 AM, rice or paddy is sprinkled on the floor. By 11am, birds were provided green leaves or Azolla. During afternoon, steamed fish waste will be kept in different places for the birds to feed on. In the evening, coarse corn or rice is sprinkled on the floor. Birds were return back to the shed by 6.45 PM and it will be closed.

We also provide essential mineral formulation mixed in water, to the birds twice a week. Similarly, we provide amino acid made of fish waste to them, mixed with water, weekly once. We also give them onion soaked in buttermilk. All these help the birds to gain immunity to fight against diseases. Birds will be vaccinated as per the required schedule.

FISH WASTE THAT MINIMIZES FODDER COST!

The remaining fish waste is used boiled and provided to them as feed. birds relish to eat azolla and fish waste. We produce our own azolla which helps in reduction of fodder cost. We get fish waste free of cost from the market.



LESSONS LEARNT!

At the beginning, we procured some chickens from the commercial market but we lost full lot. Therefore, we procured healthy birds (country breeds) from rural areas. Since then mortality has been brought down. If birds were procured from the market then, they should be vaccinated as per the required schedule as soon as they reach the farm to reduce the mortality. Besides, we don't mix them with our existing stock and we quarantine them for twenty days. Once we ensure their health, then they will be allowed to mingle with our existing groups. This is the best way of preventing diseases and protecting the flock. Avoid sudden change in feed.

