

CHICKENS AND DUCKS

General welfare and care

Do not allow chickens, ducks and other birds to wander around the community and eat and drink whatever they can find. If birds are provided with food, clean water and shelter, the result will be more meat and eggs.

Housing chickens and ducks

The first step to improve the flock is to keep them in a closed area and provide them with food, water and shelter.

If chickens and ducks are kept in houses-

- They will be protected from the sun, rain and cold.
- They will be protected from being stolen or killed by predators such as dogs, cats, birds of prey, mongooses, and snakes, and being killed on the road by traffic. Food and water consumption can be controlled.
- They should be prevented from eating bad food or drinking dirty water.
- Nesting boxes can be provided, which make it easy to collect eggs.
- The spread of disease can be stopped more easily.
- Housing for chickens should be built on high ground.
- The house should be 2 m (6 ft) high. It is best to use brick, stone or concrete for the first 0.5 m (18 in.) of the wall.
- The floor of the house can be made of soil, sand, or concrete that is easy to clean.
- Spread litter such as wood shavings, dried leaves or other plant material over the floor of the house, in a layer 8 cm (3 in.) deep.
- Ducks do not require perches. Nesting boxes need to be low or have sloping ramps so that ducks can navigate them.
- Ducks need a container of water they can put their heads and necks in.
- It is not necessary to provide a pond.
- Laying ducks (ducks laying eggs) must be kept in their house each morning until they lay their eggs.

Feed requirements

- Like other animals, birds require carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals and vitamins in their feed.
- The proportion of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, minerals and vitamins that the bird needs in the rations will depend on the age of the bird and whether it is being raised for meat or for laying eggs.
- From hatching (1 day old) to 3 months of age, birds continue to grow. They need feed that contains a large amount of protein. The feed should have a protein content of approximately 18.5%.
- At 3 months old, birds raised for meat need less protein. Their feed should have a protein content of approximately 12%.
- After 3 months old, birds laying eggs need more protein and minerals than birds raised for meat. Their feed should have a protein content of approximately 14.5%.



Common foods

- Sweet potato
- Cassava
- Compounded feed
- Coconut
- Coconut meal
- Breadfruit
- Mill mix
- Molasses
- Meat and bone meal

Water

- Birds must always have access to clean, fresh water. Each bird needs about 250 ml of water a day. In hot weather, they may need double this amount.
- Ducks need more water than chickens. Ducks do better if they can dip their heads and necks into water.

Who can farmers contact for further information?

Farmers may contact staff of the local Ministry of Agriculture or SPC Land Resources Division staff. For additional technical assistance, contact the SPC Land Resources Division at: gibsons@spc.int

