

Poultry Development In Bangladesh

—Dr. Kalyan Kumar Pandit

POULTRY farming is an industry. Poultry on a small scale is raised by the rural farmers of Bangladesh as a part of their integrated farming system. The concept that poultry farming should grow both in the rural and urban as independent industrial units is in its primary stage of realisation. Apparently Bangladesh is far behind in doing tangible progress in poultry farming although her neighbouring countries like India, Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Pakistan have made tremendous achievements in the field.

Although statistics differ as to the correct number of poultrybirds in the country, a working round figure has been estimated to be 90 millions, of which about 17 million are ducks. Assuming a 1983 population of 94.7 million, the per capita availability of eggs is about 13' per year (8 hens and 5 ducks), poultry meat consumption is around 0.50 kg per capita. Where the per head per week poultry meat requirement is 1 kg per capita, annual requirement stands 52 kgs as against the available supply of 1/2 kg per capita. This animal protein gap dimensions can well be realised. To obviate this, it is necessary to ensure due awareness among the entrepreneurs in this field.

The development of poultry industry both in private and public sectors is beset with problems. Some of them are discussed here.

Development of stocks: Though various stocks (both layers and broilers) have been imported till date, we are yet to identify or develop the appropriate stocks. Proper selection of appropriate breed of poultrybirds economically adaptable to the environment of Bangladesh is a precondition to the accelerated development of poultry. The appropriate poultry breed for the country is chosen quickly, proper study/research on poultry is

The author throws light on the problems of poultry development in the country and also suggests remedial measures that need be taken.

needed to be carried out by expert geneticists. Realisation of the importance of poultry research and genetic improvement is a must right at the moment.

Poultry Feed: Unlike in the developed countries, the ingredients of poultry feed in this country are few. The major ingredients are wheat, wheat bran, rice polish, sesum oil cake, fishmeal, oyster shell, vitamin/mineral premixers etc. Scarcity of feed is a formidable constraint on large-scale poultry farming. Timely collection and preservation in a scientific method of agricultural wastes and grain residues like brans, leaves of wheat plants etc. are to be ensured. Unconventional feed sources like frog wastes, fish wastes etc. may also be experimented with for profitable use in compound poultry feed. Agri-industrial by products that could be used as feed for poultry remains to be exploited. Grant of subsidy on finished feed and raw materials and continuity of the ban on export of poultry feed raw materials (namely rice polish, wheat bran, tiloil cake etc) are necessary.

Disease: One of the major constraints on the development of poultry industry in Bangladesh is disease, due to which 30% of birds die out annually. Both preventive and curative medicines are not readily available in the country.

Imported chicks can act as carriers of disease and unplanned imports of live virus vaccines also facilitates induction of new viral diseases in the country. A regulatory law has to be enacted in order to regulate imports of live virus vaccines. The government should properly evaluate requirements of

poultry medicines in the country and arrange manufacture of the same through local pharmaceuticals/Agro-chemical industry in order to ensure availability of required medicines at the time of needs. The production of vaccines against different poultry diseases should be increased.

Laboratory Facilities: Commercial poultry in most cases suffers due to lack of diagnostic services. Delay in diagnosis and application of control measures causes avoidable loss. In order to cope with this problem, specific efforts are to be made by the government to equip the central disease investigation laboratory and seven field diseases investigation laboratories with modern sophisticated equipment.

Testing/analysis of feed ingredients is of primary importance for formulating the balanced ration as well as to safeguard the value of high cost. Nutrition testing facility is inadequate to cater to the existing needs for testing poultry feeds consumed in both public and private sector poultry farms. Regional laboratories for carrying out such tests not been set up as yet. The central laboratory should be strengthened and the regional laboratories should be set up providing all facilities on a priority basis.

Capital: Before liberation there was no specific programme of the erstwhile central bank regarding development of poultry in the then East Pakistan. During preliberation period the Agricultural Development Bank was the only financing institution engaged in agricultural lending, including poultry. However, from 1977 the nationalised commercial banks have also been extending loans to the poultry farmers.

Bangladesh Bank have also undertaken a commercial poultry financing scheme in the year 1983 with a maximum of Tk. 8.00 lacs being 80% of the total for each farm, of which Tk. 7.50 lac is capital cost and Tk. 0.50 lacs is operating cost for two months.

Although financial institutions are engaged in extending loans to poultry farmers a good number of poultry farmers are deprived of the loans because of ignorance, cumbersome process of loan disbursement etc. The government may take up a policy to reach the bank loans to genuine poultry farmers. Financial institutions should not grant loans unless technical/economic studies are carried out by the competent authority. Introduction of a system of licence to private entrepreneurs for commercial poultry enterprises is considered necessary.

Insurance: Since poultry farming is a delicate enterprise involving high risks, provision of insurance should be made to save the farmers from losses due to diseases and other natural hazards. This could be taken up by the Sadharan Bima Corporation.

Now it is considered essential to have a macro plan framed and a sound policy for poultry development industry in the country and thereby ensure due participation of both private and public sector agencies in the field. In the 3rd five year plan, the poultry sector is awarded high priority in increasing the production of poultry meat and eggs, to meet up the pressing needs of essential food stuffs for human consumption. The development programme on poultry will also supplement or boost the farmers' income and thereby generate rural employment and its impact will be recorded in the national economy of Bangladesh.