



FEEDING MANAGEMENT

Feed is the greatest expense in commercial poultry establishments, therefore it is important to purchase feed from a reputable miller who can assure consistency in the quality and performance of the feed.

Variations in the nutrient composition and quality of feed ingredients results in variations in feed composition and texture. These are due to variations in raw feed ingredients from season to season and even shipment to shipment.

It is important to avoid mixing feeds from several millers, adding other protein source (fish meal etc) and mineral salts (DCP) as this changes the balance in the feed thereby affecting performance. Excess of some of these products also negatively affects the final product e.g. fishy tinge in eggs / meat due to more than 5% fish meal in feed.

To start a flock, feeder lids or plastic feeder trays (one per 100 chicks) should be used. Feed can also be spread on paper placed over the litter. Gradually remove the feeder lids or trays, replacing them with the adult feeders. By the time the birds are ten (10) days old, all the lids and trays should have been removed.

Provide adequate feeder space as recommended below for proper growth of the birds.

TYPE OF FEEDER	RECOMMENDED FEEDER SPACE
TROUGH	5.0 cm per bird (minimum)
PANS (33cm diameter)	30-50 birds per pan
TUBES (42cm diameter)	30-50 birds per tube

Each type of birds have feeds specific to their growth as indicated below:

- Broilers**
- Broilers Starter Crumbs / Mash from day 1 to 2 weeks of age
 - Broiler Grower from 3 to 4 weeks
 - Broiler Finisher Pellets / Crumbs / Mash from 4 to 6 weeks.

- Layers**
- Broiler Starter 1 to 3 weeks of age
 - Pullet Starter 4 to 8 weeks of age
 - Pullet Grower 9 to 10 weeks of age
 - Pullet Developer 11 to 1st egg
 - Layers Mash 1st egg to slaughter

During the changing period of the rations, mix the two rations so that the change is gradual. An abrupt change is stressful to the birds and can affect performance. Vitamins can be provided during this time to reduce the stress.

WATER

Distribute drinkers evenly throughout the whole house, alternating them with the feeders so that they are easily accessible to all birds. No bird should walk more than 1.5m to get either feed or water.

Provide one chick fount for 75 chicks during the first week and gradually replace them with the regular drinkers allowing space.

TYPE OF DRINKER	RECOMMENDED WATER SPACE
TROUGH	2.0 cm per bird
BELL SHAPE (35cms diameter)	6-9 per 1000 birds but not less than 4
NIPPLES	8-10 birds per nipple

Wash and disinfect chick drinkers daily. Ensure the drinkers are filled with fresh water after washing. Ensure the birds have access to wholesome drinking water at all times and NEVER allow the drinkers to go dry.

In hot periods it is essential to provide the flock with cool water as this will improve productivity. It is therefore extremely important to protect the water tanks from direct sunlight or ensure they have a reflective surface.

Always adjust the drinkers and feeders levels as the birds grow to ensure that the equipment is always slightly above the level of the birds' backs. This minimizes spillage.

Use a reliable water sanitizer (like chlorine) to control diseases-producing organisms in the water.