



## Poultry - Small Farm and Household Production

### Poultry Production at the Small Farm or Yard Level

Small farm or yard poultry production may be greatly enhanced through simple improvements in disease prevention, housing and supplemental feeding.

#### Why is poultry production important?

Small-farm and household poultry production is a critical component of food security and income for people living in poor rural communities. Women, the elderly, and small children can care for poultry more easily than other livestock. Poultry eggs and meat provide vital nutrition, including key micro-nutrients that are often missing in the diets of poor people.



Free-ranging chickens and ducks often offer a tremendous opportunity to improve nutrition and incomes.

#### What are the main challenges to poultry production?

A program to increase small-farm and village poultry should address local attitudes, disease prevention and improving poultry housing and feeding.

**Attitude**-- Although village poultry provide several crucial benefits to rural people, its value is not always appreciated. Poultry are often neglected in many programs for rural development and poverty reduction.

**Disease Prevention**—Diseases are the number one problem limiting small-scale poultry production. See Fact Sheet on Prevention of Poultry Diseases.

**Housing**-- Village poultry are often free-ranging, which makes them susceptible to predators, theft, and diseases.

**Feed**-- Although village poultry can subsist by scavenging, supplemental feeding can dramatically increase production.

#### How do you increase poultry production at the small farm or household level?

1. **Attitude.** Meet with local leaders, agricultural extension staff, and NGO's to discuss the importance of improving poultry production.
2. **Disease Prevention.** Locate a local source of Newcastle vaccine and regularly vaccinate poultry (e.g. typically two to three times a year), and establish a program to prevent poultry diseases (See Fact Sheet on *Preventing Poultry Diseases*).
3. **Housing.** Assess local methods for housing poultry at the small-farm and household level, and develop a program to train more people how to build poultry housing with local materials. Farmer to farmer demonstrations of good poultry coops is an effective approach.
4. **Feed.** Assess what farmers are feeding their poultry and identify additional cheap accessible sources of feed for poultry local farmers.

Prepared by David Bunn, January 11, 2012.

**Reference:** See FAO Small-Scale Poultry Production Technical Guide, 2004.

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