**Poultry Development in Assam**

Assam being a state where majority of the population are non-vegetarian, there is a huge demand for eggs and poultry in the form of meat.

As per 2011 population census, the total population of Assam is around 312 lakh. Considering the total population to be non-vegetarian and as per ICMR recommendation of 180 eggs per head per year, total egg requirement for the state is around 560 crore per year. Moreover, as per ICMR recommendation of meat consumption @ 10.8 kg per year per person, total meat requirement for the state is 3370 lakh kgs annually. Considering 40% of the total meat requirement to be poultry meat, annual poultry meat requirement for the state is 1348 lakh kgs.

1. **Egg Production:**

Against the annual requirement of 560 crore of eggs, the state produces around 47.50 crore (Integrated Sample Survey report) of eggs annually. Accordingly there is a shortage of 512.5 crore eggs annually. This shortfall can be mitigated to a great extent through establishment of commercial layer farms in private sector as well as promoting backyard poultry farming.

1. ***Establishment of Commercial Layer farm:***

Establishment of commercial layer farm is a major sectoral intervention for achieving targeted egg production as well as gainful employment.

Presently there are 8-10 nos. of commercial layer farms in the state with varying capacity ranging from 2000 birds to 40,000 birds.

Establishment of few commercial layer farms with a total bird capacity of 40.00 – 45.00 lakh will help the state in producing approximately 125 crore of eggs annually.

To encourage the interested entrepreneur for establishment/ expansion of commercial layer farms, there is provision for financial support under EDEG component of National Livestock Mission. Recently few entrepreneurs have availed the opportunity and have started activities in this line.

Moreover, provision for additional financial support has been proposed in the draft “Poultry Development Policy of Assam”, which will further help in encouraging the interested entrepreneurs.

1. ***Backyard Farming:***

Backyard poultry farming is an age old practice in this region which can contribute to a great extent in terms of egg and meat production. However, this traditional practice is running in an unorganized sector.

During 2011-12 the department implemented RBPD scheme under CSS in 9 nos. of districts where 20 nos. LIT chicks (unsexed) were distributed among 9300 nos. of beneficiaries. It was observed that on implementation of the schemes 67,22,309 nos. of additional eggs were produced in the succeeding year.

Emphasis on backyard poultry is the need of the hour. However, availability of hatching eggs as per requirement is the main hurdle. Few department farms are maintaining parent stock of LIT birds and they are supplying the DOC to the interested farmers. But they are able to cover only a small percentage of the needy farmers. All the department poultry farms need to make operational for maintaining parent stock of LIT bird. They should work as DOC production centre for distribution of chicks among interested farmers at Govt. approved rate. Keeping this in mind, the Department has proposed for Rejuvenation of 18 nos. of Govt. Poultry/ Duck farms under RIDF.

1. **Meat Production:**

As stated earlier, annual meat requirement for the state is 3370 lakh kgs considering entire state population as non-vegetarian. Considering 40% to be chicken meat, annual poultry meat requirement for the state is around 1350 lakh kgs.

Considering weekly broiler placement, the broiler production of the state is as follows –

Weekly broiler placement = 15-20 lakh DOC (Day old Chick)

Taking the minimum, Weekly broiler placement = 15 lakh DOC

Weekly live bird production = 14 lakh (excluding mortality)

Weekly total live bird production = 28 lakh kgs. (Avg 2 kgs live wt. per bird)

Annual live bird production = 1456 lakh kgs. (28 X 52 weeks)

Total annual dressed meat production = 946 lakh kgs (65% of live wt.)

Moreover meat production from layer birds & ducks is 80 lakh kg annually (ISS report). As such total poultry meat production annually is 1076 lakh kgs. There is a shortfall of around 324 lakh kgs annually.

The major hurdle in broiler sector in the state is the cost of hatching eggs. Due to non-availability of broiler parent breeding farm in the state, the private hatcheries operating in the state imports hatching eggs from other state at high cost. The cost is around Rs. 35/- per egg. This affects the cost of DOC which is at present is around Rs. 50/- per DOC which ultimately affect the production cost of ready birds. Further, import of hatching eggs from outside state also affects the hatchability of the eggs which ultimately contributes to high cost of DOC.

Establishment of a broiler parent breeding farm in the state will bring down the cost of production of ready bird which will give a boost to this sector. Accordingly provision for financial support has been created in the draft poultry development policy to encourage entrepreneurs for setting up of Broiler Breeding Farm.

1. **Departmental Poultry/ Duck Farm:**

The A.H. & Veterinary Department, Assam has 22 nos. of Poultry/Duck farms in the state. Out of them 4 nos. are located in 6th scheduled districts.

The farms with location & present status are as follows-

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sl. No.** | **Name of the Farm** | **Location** | **District** | **Status** | **Remarks** |
| 1 | Central Duck Breeding cum Research Station, | Kaliabor | Nagaon | Functional |  |
| 2 | Govt. Duck & poultry farm, | Silcoorie | Cachar | Functional |  |
| 3 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Baladhmari | Goalpara | Functional |  |
| 4 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Khanikar | Dibrugarh | Functional |  |
| 5 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Baghchung | Jorhat | Functional |  |
| 6 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Barhampur | Nagaon | Functional |  |
| 7 | Duck cum Fish Farm, | Sipajhar | Mangaldoi | Functional | Hatchery activity is on. |
| 8 | Govt. Duck & Poultry Farm, | Joysagar | Sivsagar | Functional |  |
| 9 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Haflong | Karbi-Anglong | Functional |  |
| 10 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Diphu | Karbi-Anglong | Functional |  |
| 11 | Duck Farm, | Phuloni | Karbi-Anglong | Functional |  |
| 12 | District Poultry Farm, | Hamren | Karbi-Anglong | Functional |  |
| 13 | Regional Broiler Chick Production cum Demonstration Farm, | Birubari | Kamrup (M) | Non-functional |  |
| 14 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Ganakkuchi | Barpeta | Non-functional |  |
| 15 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Tezpur | Sonitpur | Non-functional |  |
| 16 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Japjapkuchi | Nalbari | Non-functional |  |
| 17 | Central Chick Rearing Farm, | Khanapara | Kamrup (M) | Non-functional |  |
| 18 | Govt. Poultry Farm, | Birubari | Kamrup(M) | Non-functional |  |
| 19 | Duck Farm, | Hajo | Kamrup(R) | Non-functional |  |
| 20 | Dist. Poultry Farm, | Demow | Sivsagar | Non-functional |  |
| 21 | Coordinated Poultry Breeding Farm, | Tezpur | Sonitpur | Non-functional |  |
| 22 | Coordinated Poultry Breeding Farm, | Khanapara | Kamrup(M) | Non-functional |  |

Presently 12 farms out of 22 farms are operational. Most of these farms were supported under various schemes like CSS, RKVY, State plan etc. But the operational activities in some of the farms either could not be started or continued due to the surrender of operational fund. In few farms like Hajo, Kaliabor, Demow etc. the fund earmarked as Revolving fund for operational activities could not be drawn.

Though the main objectives behind establishment of these farms were demonstration & chick production centre for LIT birds, only few farms are rendering the desired services.

As stated earlier, the main bottleneck is supporting the interested farmers in backyard poultry farming is the availability of hatching egg of LIT birds.

Making all the department poultry /duck farms operational is the need of the hour. These farms will maintain parent stock of LIT birds for production of hatching eggs. The farms will hatch these eggs in their hatcheries & will produce DOC which will be distributed to the interested farmers at Govt. approved rate. Taking these steps, the constrain of hatching eggs & DOC of LIT birds can be overcome to a great extent which will ultimately boost egg production through backyard farming.