

Backyard farming of Vanraja fowl for enhancing rural poultry production and income- A case study

Rationale of Intervention

Backyard poultry production is an old age profession of rural families of India. It is the most potent source for subsidiary incomes for landless and poor farmers. It is an enterprise with low initial investment but higher economic returns and can easily be managed by women, children and old age persons of the households. In Andaman & Nicobar Islands, total backyard poultry population is 7.79 lacs out of which 1.25 lacs belong to improved varieties. It has been noted that about 89% of rural livestock households rear poultry. A large proportion of these households in the rural areas rear desi non-descript birds with low production potential and usually women and children are involved in taking care of these birds. For rural women it serves nutritious food for the family and important source of immediate cash income to meet household expenditure. The rural households do not have much knowledge on different aspects of poultry management. Hence, sufficient knowledge on backyard poultry is required.

Interventions made

Twenty four numbers of backyard poultry farmers in the Dukenagar village, North and Middle Andaman were trained on “General care and management of Vanaraja birds under backyard poultry farming”. The training equipped the backyard chicken farmers with the requisite information and skill on scientific practices in backyard poultry farming. In order to showcase different technologies related to scientific practices in backyard farming, a demonstration on “Backyard farming of Vanaraja birds” was also organised at farmer’s field (Table. 1). Under the demonstration, fifty Vanaraja day old chicks were supplied to two progressive farmers belonging to two different self help group among the participants. During the period of demonstration, field visits, veterinary aid and media coverage were also employed to facilitate the stakeholder in adoption of scientific backyard poultry farming practices. After successful nursery rearing of the birds upto 4 weeks by the selected progressive farmers, the birds were distributed among the members of SHG group for rearing under free range.

Table 1. Best practices demonstrated at the farmer's field.

Sl. No	Technology	Purpose	Source of Technology
1.	Artificial incubation using Mini-hatching Machine	Sustainable supply of DOC/ Scale up of operation.	ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair
2.	Low cost brooding	Higher survival rate	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
3.	Balanced feed preparation using locally available ingredient	Higher growth and sustainable production	ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad
4.	Vaccination	Prevention of infectious diseases	Department of AH & VS
5.	Deworming	Reduce worm load	ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair

Outcome

The participants got sensitized and were convinced, learnt the skill, gained knowledge through training program (Fig. 1). The data on performance of the Vanaraja birds during the demonstration tenure is presented in Table 2. The body weight of Vanaraja birds reared by following scientific management practices was found 577.28 g at 8th week compared to Vanaraja birds reared with farmers practice (282.57 g) without aid of demonstration. Overall the mortality rate was less under the demonstration period compared to the local method of rearing. The benefit cost ratios for the demonstration was also observed to be higher (2.18) compared to local method of rearing (1.30). The study observed higher adoption level of best practices in the participants after intervention.

Table 2. Performance of demonstration on Backyard farming of Vanaraja birds.

Variables	Vanaraja Birds	
	Farmers practice	Low cost balanced feed*
Weight at 4th week (gm.)	170.71	239.28
Weight at 8th week (gm.)	282.57	577.28
Mortality (percent)	38.14	17.28
FCR	-	3.37
Benefit cost ratio	1.30	2.18

*Low cost balanced feed prepared using Broken rice (25 parts), Maize (25 parts), Rice Bran (20 parts), Groundnut cake (10 parts), Coconut cake (10 parts), Fish meal (08 parts), Mineral Mixture (1part) and salt (1 part).

Photographs



Fig. 1 Field activities related to technical demonstration at farmers field in Dukenagar village.

Contact Details:

Dr. Shardul Vikramlal

SMS, KVK, Nimbudera,

ICAR-CIARI Andaman

Email Id: shardulla184@gmail.com

Phone No: 9531801728