

1. After the last bird has left the house, immediately take out the moveable equipment and remove the old litter, dust down walls, top, wire netting and sweep clean the floor. Remove equipment such as drinkers, tube/trough feeders. Soak them in water for easy cleaning. If fans have been used, then dust down and wipe with disinfectant.

2. Wash the shed with water and disinfectant (such as formalin, biogram, chickguard, actiplus or microdot). To have a good clean out order to minimize future disease risks, the whole shed and equipment have to be thoroughly washed and disinfectant with the right dose rates.

3. Flush water tanks and water line using Safsol. Safsol is non-corrosive to water tanks and is an active cleaning agent for water lines removing the build ups due to medication etc.

4. After this shed has been sprayed with disinfectant and dried out, then spread clean, dry and non-arsenic wood shaving on the shed floor. Rate: 3 – 4” in the rest of the shed. If the bhach intake is soon, then set up the equipment making sure that all are in good condition and worn parts have been repaired or replaced. These include the feeding, drinking, lighting, ventilation, breeding and medication equipment.

5. It is always advisable that you consult your nearest Ministry of Agriculture office on your shed preparation and layout.

6. In high-risk disease areas, once the shed had been set up, there is another round of disinfecting the sheds. This recommended with knapsack or mist blowers with powerful disinfectant such as formalin. The shed is then closed and spelled approximately 10m – 15 days.

7. One day before delivery of day old chicks, open the shed to allow fresh air in order to remove any gaseous build ups. Re-check equipment to ensure they are working properly.

8. The brooding curtains must be properly installed, heat to be turned on, paper spread on brooding area, water filled up in supplementary drinkers and feed spread lightly on the paper and in scratch trays. All these must be done 5 – 6 hours before you get the chicks. The brooding temperature

should be around 31 – 32 degrees Celsius to give a good start.

9. For feed to be used, please refer to your Ministry Staff to give you detailed information. For meat chicks, broiler starter is recommended while chick starter is recommended for layers at the start. Most backyard farmers start their meat birds with chick starter but we recommend to give an early start with broiler starter and later on to chick starter. Keep the birds on starter feed for at least 3 weeks.

#### **FEEDING SCHEDULE Broiler Chicken:**

Broiler starter – 1 – 21 days

Broiler grower – 21 – 35 days

Broiler finisher – 35 – 42 days

#### **Layer Chicken**

Chick starter – 1 – 6 weeks

Pullet grower – 6 – 18 weeks

Layer mash or hivita pellets – 18 weeks onward.



For more information contact: Ministry of Agriculture, Private Mail, Raiwaqa.  
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Facebook: Ministry of Agriculture Fiji Twitter: Fiji Agriculture  
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Ministry of Agriculture

# **A GUIDE TO RAISE CHICKENS**



Farmer's Leaflet 2015

## INTRODUCTION

Backyard farming has been in Fiji for years. It usually utilizes modern breeds of chickens concentrated around urban centers due to easy access of feed and markets for sale of live birds as well as eggs. The free range jungle moorgi takes approximately 8 months to grow to achieve 1.5 kg live weight. This can be obtained in 5 weeks by modern hybrids. This bulletin looks at chickens for backyard farming.

## BREEDS OF CHICKEN

Early breeds of chicken such as Rhode Island Red, Australorp, Leghorn, Plymouth Rock, etc. were intercrossed with extensive selection to arrive at the commercial hybrids which we now use in Fiji. Examples of these breeds are Ross, Tegal, Cobb (meat), Shavers white/Brown, Hyline white/brown (layer).

## CHARACTERISTICS FOR MODERN BREEDS FOR BACKYARD CHICKEN FARMING MEAT CHICKENS:

- Fast growth
- Lean meat
- More breast meat
- Higher yield
- Better heat tolerance
- Excellent liveability
- Low feed conversion ratio
- Less susceptibility to disease outbreak.

## LAYER CHICKENS

- Light breed



- High live ability
- High egg production
- Less susceptibility to disease outbreaks
- Adapts to different climatic conditions
- Low feed conversion ratio
- Better average egg weight

## BECOMING A MODERN BACKYARD CHICKEN FARMER

### 1. How to become a modern Backyard farmer?

Consult the staff of the Ministry of Agriculture, Poultry Section, to advise you on the details of modern backyard farming.

### 2. Who can become modern backyard chicken farmers?

The Ministry of Agriculture encourages people who are serious, committed and prepared to work with chickens to become successful backyard farmers.

### 3. Why should you become a backyard farmers?

- As a livelihood for your family.
- A cheap and quality protein supply for your family.

### 4. When should you become a backyard farmer?

Whenever suitable. When you have some cash to purchase materials and equipment to raise a small flock of birds.

### 5. Where to seek advise?

Ministry of Agriculture:

- Nausori, Box 674, Phone 3479445,
- Lautoka, Box 264, Phone 6661000,
- Labasa, Box 109, Phone 8812244.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR BACKYARD FARMING

1. Housing – reasonably high lean-to shed is acceptable with some roof insulation to prevent heat stress. Thatched Bure is excellent for backyard farming in tropical conditions of 10ft by 10ft (3m x 3m) has a capacity for 100 meat birds whereas a 15ft by 10ft (4.5m x 3m) shed can accommodate 100 layer birds. Using modern materials to construct a broiler shed will cost about \$700, where as a layer shed incurs a cost of about \$1050. Using local materials will bring the cost down by more than half. Shed must be constructed with soil 6” walls and wire netting to prevent drafts, mongoose, wild birds, cats and dogs. It must be strong enough to prevent cyclone.

2. Water Supply – Water supply must be from a good clean source. Plenty of water is needed for chickens. A heater tank is preferred and the size depends on the size of flock. A 100 – 200 (ltr) Gallon tank would be suitable for 500 birds.

3. Lighting – Nowadays electricity is available in most places. Bazine light or hurricane lamp where there is no electricity supply. Light is essential for modern hybrids for quick productions.

4. Heating – Need curtains on the side of the sheds to prevent draft.

Disease Free Environment – Create a disease free environment. No domestic or wild birds to be allowed into the shed. Diseases can cost the farmer a lot of money in medication and affect animal health resulting in permanent growth retardation or even death.

\* Prevention rather than treatment is advisable.

## SHED PREPARATION FOR BATCH INTAKE

The suggestion shed preparation method applies to both the backyard and meat and layer chickens.

If the shed is new and has never been used, than the preparation is simple. Just spray the shed with a disinfectant such as formalin, biogram, chickguard, actiplus or microdot and continue with the procedures 4-9 laid down below. But if the shed had chickens in them than follow these simple procedures.

