

Health Management

The key principles of layer health management are:

1. The isolation of the flock from disease causing organisms – quarantine.

- Early recognition of disease
- Early treatment of disease
- Quarantine sick birds
- Provide correct feed and water

2. The destruction of as many harmful organisms as possible – hygiene.

- Thorough cleaning (Clean and disinfect) of poultry houses and equipment after each flock has been removed.
- Keep litter material dry and friable and:
 - ◇ Battery cage – Remove litter material weekly
 - ◇ Use clean litter material after washing and disinfecting the shed and do not re-use litter.
- Maintain all houses and ancillary buildings and surrounds in a clean and tidy state.

3. Monitoring the health of the chickens

- Daily checks of the flock.
 - ◇ Behaviour – Eating, drinking, alertness, mobility
 - ◇ Laying percentage
 - ◇ Egg quality
 - ◇ Droppings
 - ◇ Plumage cover & quality

Note: Consult your Poultry Extension Officer or Veterinary Officer before administering any form of treatment, in case of sickness.



MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

NUTRITIONAL FOOD SECURITY EGG PRODUCTION MODEL



Department of Veterinary and Livestock Services

**For more information contact the Poultry
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Agricultural
Information Section

Introduction

Eggs are one of the most nutritious foods. They are a source of first class proteins which are essential for the human body and help address the issue of stunting on children. Therefore, every household should have enough eggs per month to satisfy their nutritional requirements. Having small number of layers per household enables constant supply of fresh eggs within the household for the whole month. Eggs produced may be used as a cheaper source of input for those who bake for sale. The eggs also alleviate the costs of inputs for those with home industries like baking which makes more profit for these industries. In raising chickens, skills are earned and it becomes a hobby and refreshing as layers can be raised anywhere, can it be rural, urban or semi-urban as they are not noisy and require less space.

Outcomes as per the Model

As per > recommendations each person must consume 2 -3 eggs per week. An average number of members per household in Eswatini is 6-7 people (....). Therefore, this model is aimed at making sure that each household nutritional requirements are met. Outcomes for this model are;

- Food and Nutritional Security
 - ◇ Have at least 3 to 5 layers per household
 - ◇ Produce an average of 120 eggs per month
- Convenient, efficient and affordable housing for 5 layers

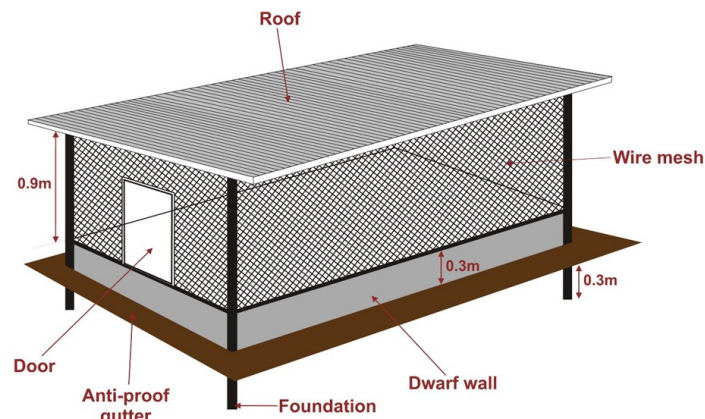
Requirements

1. **Housing-** Use an old house that have ample light penetrating
 - Construct a cheap house out of local available Material
2. **Chickens** – Source Point of lay Layers (16-18 weeks old) from reputable suppliers
3. **Feed** – Layer Mash from reputable suppliers
4. **Equipments** – Feeders and drinkers (Can be bought or home made)

Housing

- The laying house may be made of locally available and cheap material.
- The inside of the house should be arranged so that it requires minimum labor and maximize space.

- The amount of floor space recommended is 5-6 hens/m² for deep litter system.
- Perches must be incorporated for the hens to roost at night.
- The house should keep away predators and be rain proof.



Equipment

1. Feeder and drinker

- One feeder and one drinker is required to provide fresh feed and clean cool water.
- Home-made material can be used. This must be designed in such a way that it is easy to clean, prevents feed wastage, prevents spillage and be rust free.
- The drinker should be large enough to provide water requirements of the birds for the whole day.

2. Laying Nest.

- Only one nest is required.
- Nest could be made of grass, wood, empty containers and placed at the dark corner of the house.
- Place bedding material inside the nest to cushion the eggs.

NUTRITION

1. Feed

- Layers are fed laying mash.
- Each layer eats an average of 120g per day, therefore 5 layers eat 600g per day.

Feed weight



Half of the Mug = 120g

Number of feed

1. Half of the mug feeds = 1 chicken
2. A full mug feeds = 2 chickens

* This is approximately ____ cups of metal mugs (see picture below-Penny).

Supplementary feeding

- If the area is fenced and/or there is no other poultry species at home, layers can scavenge.
- Scavenging layers get vitamins by eating green grass and proteins from insects.
- Fresh vegetables such as cabbages and lettuce may be given to layers.
- Kitchen scraps may be given to layers.
- Leftover food from humans should not be given to avoid zoonotic diseases.
- Spoiled food should not be given as it can make layers sick

Note: Supplementation does not replace the standard laying mash daily requirements.

2. Water

- Every animal requires access to clean, cool water.
- Water should be provided in clean containers, refilled daily and placed in shaded areas.
- Vitamins should be added every now and then to the water.