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GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA

EVALUATION STUDY ON THE NAYA BUNGALOW POULTRY FARM

DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS, STATISTICS AND EVALUATION
GOVERNMENT OF MEGHALAYA
SHILLONG

DIRECTORATE OF ECONOMICS:STATISTICS & EVALUATION
EVALUATION UNIT

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Introduction

In Meghalaya, poultry is confined mostly to rearing of fowls and to some extent ducks also. It is a useful source of subsidiary income to many households and a source of protein for the State's population.

2. According to the Livestock Census of 1972, there were 979,262 poultry birds in the State. The number in the United District of Khasi and Jaintia Hills was 535,568 and in the Garo Hills 433,694. These figures give a per capita of 0.88 birds for the Khasi and Jaintia district and 1.09 for the Garo Hills with a State average of 0.96. The comparison with the neighbouring States and elsewhere is given below :

		Poultry per head of population
Meghalaya	(1972)	0.96
Manipur	(1972)	1.01
Nagaland	(1972)	1.40
Assam	(1966)	0.66
W.Bengal	(1966)	0.30
Andhra	(1966)	0.34
India	(1972)	0.25

3. Programmes for development of poultry on modern lines have been undertaken even before the 5 year plans though on very much restricted scale. Further steps were taken in the 5 year plans with enlarged effort made in each succeeding plan. When the Meghalaya State came into being in 1970, 5 Government farms were already in existence in Meghalaya. These were at Naya Bungalow, Upper Shillong, Mawryngkneng, Jowai and Tura. The total flock in these farms was around 51,000 birds of which the Naya Bungalow Farm alone accounted for nearly 48,000 birds. In addition, special schemes have also been undertaken under the Applied Nutrition Programme in 5 C.D.Blocks, namely, Betasing, Dadenggiri, Pynursla, Mynso-Raliang and Shella-Bholaganj.

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a sample of beneficiaries directly assisted by the farm. Initially it was visualized to study all aspects of the farm but as the data collection started, it was found not possible to embark on such a task due to numerous deficiencies in the records made available and discrepancy of figures maintained at the farm and at the Directorate office. When this report was about to be finalized, another set of information about the farm has come out in the review notes of the Accountant General, Assam, etc. These information could not, however, be made use in this report due to limitation of time. However, the findings of this report and the audit notes would broadly lead to the same conclusion in many respects. The field work of the present study was carried out by one Research Officer and one Research Assistant who also made preliminary analysis of the information collected. Collection of data from the field was made between April, 1975 and July, 1975. Revisit was also later made to verify the discrepancies and obtain additional information.

7. The Naya Bungalow Poultry Farm started first as a Poultry Extension Unit attached to the Bhoi Area Development Block sometime during 1959-60. It was converted to a District Poultry Farm in 1965-66 and upgraded to a Central Hatchery-cum-Farm in 1970-71. In the short span this farm had emerged as the only poultry farm in the composite Assam able to balance its accounts and show surplus. It had one of the lowest mortality rate and best egg performance among the poultry farms in the composite Assam. In terms of these criteria alone the performance of the farm has deteriorated somewhat in recent years. But at the same time in course of these years the farm has been called upon to shoulder additional responsibilities. It would thus be unfair to judge its performance from these criteria alone. In its functions as a central hatchery, it had to accept high mortality rates and supply chicks in large numbers at un-remunerative rate. It had to function as a training centre, also providing assistance for the

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passed-out trainees at subsidized rates. The food mill was also brought under the farm. The farm was made to share with the feed mill a common establishment, fuel and light and other services but function as ~~a~~ separate units. This put a strain on the manangement with full justice could be done neither to the farm nor to the mill.

1. The Organisation

In 1968-69, as a district farm it had a manager, one poultry assistant, 2 poultry attendants and the hatchery-man. It had also one U.D. Assistant-cum-Accountant, one Grade ~~VI~~ IV and one Chowkidar. On the average the farm engaged 4 daily labourers also for various farm work on wage basis. Table at the end of this note shows the staff position in the years thereafter.

1.2 In 1971-72, the feed mill was brought under the control of the farm. The number of regular staff increased from 8 to 23 and then further to 29 in 1972-73 at which strength it was also maintained during 1973-74. 11 of these additional staff recruited were a feed mill manager, one U.D.Assistant, 2 chick attendants, 4 mill attendants, 2 L.D.Assistant-cum-typist-cum-cashier, 4 drivers, 2 handymen and 4 chowkidars. One sanctioned post of electrician-cum-operator and one post of L.D.-cum-typist were still vacant. The number of daily labourers has also increased varying from 7 to 10 per day depending upon the work load demanded at the farm. During the enquiry, the management complained that one more U.D. Assistant and one poultry attendant were needed for proper disposal of the work.

1.3 The daily labourers were recruited for works such as watering, feeding the birds, cleaning the sheds, cultivation, loading and unloading and various odd jobs in the farm. The regular staff performed the general functions of their dosignation. The number of

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birds maintained at the farm in recent years was as follows :

1968-69	-	68314	(Assam's report)
1971-72	-	47753	(Directorate of Animal Husbandry & Veterinary)
1972-73	-	39614	(-do-)
1973-74	-	54167	(-do-)

1.4 These are the average numbers according to the Assam Report and the Meghalaya Director of Veterinary & Animal Husbandry. According to the farm manager the maximum number of birds at the farm was much lower being only 33869 during 1973-74. During enquiry it was found not possible to physically verify the numbers by counting the chickens of the year that has passed. The Director of Animal Husbandry should perhaps look into the conflicting numbers as available with him and those in the farm's records and reconcile the discrepancies.

1.5 Even granting the higher figures of the Department it will at once be seen that the expansion of the farm staff has not been matched by an increase in the number of birds. On the contrary there has been a sharp reduction the number of birds compared to 1968-69. There should have been a link between recruitment of additional staff and the number of birds kept at the farm.

1.6 The lesser number of birds in recent years was due mainly to reduced hatching. The number of chicks hatched in 1968-69 was 76706 while in 1973-74 it was only 19526. This was again due to that only one of the 9 incubators could be utilised. The other 8 were kept idle as will be examined in the subsequent chapters. Moreover, this only machine in use was subject to occasional failure due to failure of electricity leading to high percentage of damage of eggs incubated. But even this machine was not utilised to full capacity for, as against its rated capacity of 4600 eggs per month, only about 3000 eggs were fed into it. This has obviously created a vicious circle of lesser birds, lesser eggs and lesser plant utilisation.

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1.7 In these circumstances, it requires only little imagination as to the utilisation of the available time of the staff. Indeed with lesser number of birds, one fails to understand why 7 to 10 labourers were engaged as against only 4 in 1968-69. During enquiry, only vague answer was forthcoming on this point. The staff directly attending the birds may be taken to be the poultry assistant, the hatchery man, the poultry attendant, the chick attendant and the daily labourers. Their number during 1968-69 was 8 taking the average of labourers to be 4. During 1973-74, the number has increased to 14 with an average of 8 labourers a day. The number of birds during these years was 68314 and 54167. While a person attended to 8536 birds in 1968-69, he attended to 3869 birds during 1973-74 or less than half the number in 1968-69. The lower ratio could have been justified on grounds for need of better attendance. But this has not been supported by results of hatching and mortality among the birds in any of the subsequent years with more hands at the farm.

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Table - 1

Statement showing staff in position at the project level

Category and Pay Scale	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74	1968-69	Remarks
Managerial:						
1. Manager Poultry Farm & Central Hatchery Rs.350 to Rs.950 p.m. (old scale)	1	1	1	1	1	
2. Manager (Feed Mill) Rs.300 -Rs.800 p.m. (old scale)	-	1	1	1 (Feed Mill)	-	
3. **TECHNICAL**						
(1) Poultry Assistant Rs.240- Rs.380 p.m.	1	1	1	1	1	
(2) Hatchery Man Rs.240 - Rs.380 p.m.	1	1	1	1	1	
(3) Poultry Attendant Rs.190 - Rs.250p.m.	2	2	2	2	2	
(4) Chick Attendant Rs.190- Rs.250 p.m.	-	-	2	2	-	
(5) Feed Mill Attendant Rs.190 - Rs.250 p.m.	4	4	4	4	-	
(6) Electrician-cum-Operator.	V	a	c	a	n	t
Ministerial:						
(1) U.D.Asstt-cum-Accountant -do- Store-keeper	2	2	2	2	1	
(2) L.D.Asstt.-cum-Typist -do- Cashier	-	-	2	2	-	
(3) L.D.Asstt.-cum-Typist under feed mill	V	a	c	a	n	t
(4) L.D.Asstt.-cum-Cashier	-	-	1	1	-	
Category and Pay Scale -						
Gr-IV- (1) Peon Rs.190- Rs.250 p.m.	1	1	1	1	1	
(2) Chowkidar Rs.190- Rs.250 p.m.	5	5	5	5	1	
(1) Driver - Rs.220-Rs.340 p.m.	-	3	4	4	-	
(2) Handyman -	2	2	2	2	-	
Total :	19	23	29	29	8	
Average no.of birds maintained annually from 1971-72 to 1973-74	-	47753	39614	54167	68314	
Average no.of birds maintained annually per person -		2076	1415	1935	8536	

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2. Egg Performance

The programme for popularisation of exotic birds has been in existence for a number of years. People at large are now aware of the existence of high laying varieties. The egg performance of the birds depends to an extent also on the feed and proper management of the flock. It has been said that in this region a local hen can lay not more than 60 to 80 eggs per year against 150 - 180 eggs in the case of exotic variety. In other countries, average was around 250 eggs. Under scientific management it has been demonstrated in the random sample test at Bangalore that Indian-bred hybrid birds can produce as many as 254 eggs per year.

2.2 As stated elsewhere, the Naya Bungalow Farm has a qualified veterinary staff and a food mill attached to it. The Farm has the best record among the poultry farms in the composite State with 194 eggs per bird in 1968 - 69. As per data supplied by the farm management, it went on improving for the succeeding two years. There after the calculations give a declining average as will be seen from below.

	Average no. of layers	Eggs obtained	Average per layer
1966-67	653	73374	112
1967-68	753	82983	110
1968-69	930	180320	194
1970-71	357	71213	199
1971-72	702	141551	201
1972-73	416	73202	176
1973-74	2065	353057	170

The average ....9..

2.3 The average per bird would appear to be satisfactory still. But the farm has not been able to keep the level of egg production steady and not to speak of maintaining a consistent trend. This adversely affected the number of eggs set aside for hatching or sold which in turn could not but have affected the wider programme of extension.

2.4 As soon from the above table, the fluctuations in the eggs production was the direct result of the fluctuation in the number of layers obtained in the farm. The investigation could not get any light as to the reasons for these fluctuations save that large number of laying birds in transit for distribution elsewhere have been shown as kept at the farm. Such big fluctuations would suggest existence of un-utilised capacity at different points of time. The number of layers in 1970-71 was 357, then went up to 701 in 1971-72, again went down to 416 in 1972-73 and again up to a record of 2065 in 1973-74. There appears to be sufficient capacity to keep more layers in the farm even after provision for transit capacity. Once this is done, the basic number of layers retained at the farm should not be allowed to fall. This would ensure a steady egg yield in the farm from its own stock rather than depending upon the transit birds as hitherto.

3. HATCHING

Another criterion by which to consider the efficiency of a poultry farm is the result of hatching. In a primitive form of management, the result depended on the capacity of the hen and as much also on weather conditions and fertility of the eggs. Result by this method naturally was subject to wide fluctuation and uncertainty. Some hens could hatch as high as 96 per cent of the eggs and some nothing at all. In a modern hatchery, these conditions have been dispensed with by

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by scientifically controlled equipments and sorting out infertile eggs and stable results can be expected. Under these controlled conditions, it is reasonable to expect a minimum of 60-70 percent result in a scientifically run hatchery.

3.2 The Naya Bungalow Farm was the only farm in the composite State to reach these levels.. The Farm has since been upgraded to a central hatchery for the Meghalaya State. It has been equipped with 9 powered incubators. The result of hatching for the later year is given below:-

	Egg set for hatching.	Result obtained.	Percentage.
1966-67	51834	25917	50.00
1967-68	59752	43908	73.4
1968-69	101100	76706	76.4
1971-72	56473	33175	58.7
1972-73	17446	13127	75.2
1973-74	49547	19526	39.4

3.3 The low percentage obtained during 1973-74 has been blamed to failure of electricity and/or the incubator. But from the dead in germ and in shell, the low percentage would also have been due to infertile eggs being incubated.

3.4 It appears quite a paradox that the hatches have become much lesser in number on the farm being converted into a Central Hatchery. The hatches in 1972-73, 1972-73 and 1973-74 were only 43%, 17% and 28% respectively of the number hatched during 1968-69 when the Farm was only a district farm. Another reason for the low number of hatches was that much of the incubator capacity had become useless. There were nine incubators at the farm purchased at different periods since 1966-67. These have a total capacity of 18000 at a time. 7 of these incubators have in fact become obsolete but no action was taken to condemn them. Only 2 incubators were in operational condition with

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4600 eggs capacity each time. But again one of these 2 incubators was lying idle waiting for repair since 1971. Since then the hatchery has been functioning with only one incubator and that also was subject to occasional break downs.

3.5 According to the management, around 200 eggs daily were set aside for hatching purposes. At this rate, the number of eggs for incubation should be about 73,000 per year. From the fore-going table, the number of eggs actually put for hatching in any of the subsequent years was very much less this number. It would again be a paradox if a central hatchery could give decreasing importance to hatching as would be apparent from below :

	Eggs produced and set aside for Hatching		
	Produced	Set aside for hatching.	Percentage
1968-69	180320	101100	56
1971-72	141551	56473	39
1972-73	732021	17446	23
1973-74	353057	49547	14

3.6 All these years the Farm had depended solely on the incubators for hatching. Even when it had only one serviceable incubator, which also was uncertain at times, no other step was thought of to maintain the hatchings level. The Animal Husbandry Deptt. may perhaps consider keeping indigenous hens side by side for hatching till the incubator capacity is restored.

4. MORTALITY RATE

The maximum permissible mortality rates in an efficiently run poultry farm can be taken as 10 to 12 percent. The Naya Bungalow Poultry Farm was the only farm in composite Assam in which the mortality rate was kept at or below this level. The Farm had its own arrangement for veterinary attendance. The manager himself was a graduate in veterinary science. He was assisted by a team of qualified staff in running the farm. With the help of modern medicines,-

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improved feeds and regular preventive measures, poultry mortality rate can now be controlled to a large extent. In fact for the years under study, there was only rare occasion in which the farm had called for extra assistance to control of bird mortality. This was to be expected had the records of the farm been consistently good throughout. But judged against its records under the composite State, the mortality of the birds in the farm in recent years has been quite alarming as will be seen from table below :

	Birds Reared Total (Nos.)	Deaths (Nos.)	Mortality Rate (Percent)
1966-67	25917	2680	10.3
1967-68	56444	4512	7.9
1968-69	68314	6830	10.3
1971-72	47753	14416	30.2
1972-73	39614	9651	24.4
1973-74	54167	12540	23.2

4.2 Mortality among the chicks was especially high. Over 95 percent of deaths was accounted by chicks. Two diseases, namely, coccidiosis and worms have occured in epidemic form among older birds and Ranikhet had taken heavy toll of the chicks. According to the management, these diseases have been kept under control. Outside assistance from Shillong and from the block was occassionally sought to control the diseases. But inspite of the best attendance numerous deaths have occured.

5. FEED

The Naya Bungalow Farm is the only farm in the State which has an attached feed mill. All the poultry feed required by the Farm was met by the mill. The mill processed ready-made feeds comprising ingredients of rice bran, wheat bran, corn, dry fish, oil cakes and a variety of vitamins. No feed was purchased by the Farm from outside. Although the feed mill was attached to the farm with a common establishment and maintenance and repair, the Farm had to pay to the mill for the feed obtained. No clear reason was given for this practice except

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for the sake of maintaining separate records.

5.1 The expenditure on feed incurred by the farm has increased by 125 percent between 1968-69 and 1973-74. Calculated on the basis of reported average number of birds at the Farm, the cost of feeding per bird increased by 185 percent. The trends are set out below:

	Expenditure on Feed		Average Number of Birds		Expenditure per Bird.
	Rupees	Index	Numbers	Index	Rs.
1968-69	77300	100	68314	100	1.13
1971-72	106367	138	47753	70	2.23
1972-73	102157	132	39614	58	2.58
1973-74	174274	225	54167	79	3.22

5.2 The above figures cover all categories of birds. The increased expenditure occured in the face of lesser number of birds maintained. But this was only to be expected in a period of rising costs. While relatively, the feed cost per bird has almost trebled, the absolute amount per bird was still quite cheap. The quantity of feed prescribed per bird was given as 100 grams for a layer, 90 grams for a grower and 50 grams for a chick. During January-February, 1975 the cost per quintal of these feeds was given as Rs.138, Rs.144 and Rs.149 respectively. At these rates it would take Rs.4.14, Rs.3.90 and Rs.2.25 to feed per bird of the respective category for a period of 30 days. These figures lead to a situation in which the actual cost per year was much lower than that calculated for a month. This looks absurb and cannot be explained by the day to day fluctuation in the number of birds at the farm unless for many months in a year the number of birds at the farm was only a very small fraction of the average reported. Otherwise accepting the reported average number, the situation was possible only when the birds were fed below the standard rations for greater periods of time. In which case, this might have been one of the causes of mortality rate of the birds in a separate chapter.

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6. Income and Expenditure.

Records at the farm do not show separate receipts from sales of different items. All receipts from sale of birds, eggs and manures were recorded only in one head. There were separate records for receipts of the feed mill (which was outside the scope of the present study) but its expenditures on maintenance, POL, electricity, etc. were lumped up in the poultry farm. The figure of salaries was culled out from the budget documents for the purpose of the analysis. The receipts and expenditure were as below :

(In rupees)

	1968-69	1970-71	1971-72	1972-73	1973-74
Receipt from sale of birds, eggs & manures.	114482	172544	135464	122718	146385
Running costs:					
on 1. Feed	77300	69304	106367	102157	174274
2. Wages for farm labour.	N.A.	12813	9337	10135	10943
3. Veterinary Expenses	N.A.	7874	1145	10247	14621
Total (1) to (3)	...	89991	116849	122539	199839
4. Electricity	N.A.	15196	24621	14897	10917
5. Other fuels including POL,	N.A.	2850	20869	17818	10834
6. Repair & Maintenance of Buildigns & equipments.	N.A.	9415	4086	7919	10987
7. Salaries	N.A.	13523	7938	10274	13200 (BE)
Total (1) to (7)	...	130975	175363	173447	245776

6.2 Cost items (1) to (3) wholly belonged to the Poultry Farm and these (4) to (7) also included those of the Feed mill.

6.3 The Naya Bungalow farm was known to be one of the well-run poultry farms in the composite State. From the above table it could be seen that it could retain this position till 1970-71. Sales proceeds could cover the running expenses including the salaries of the combined Farm-mill set up and still yielded a surplus. But from 1971-72, the situation started deteriorating. This was the combined result on one hand of sales declining or not rising enough and on the other, costs increasing. If we consider only feed, wages and veterinary expenses as

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directly accountable to a Govt. poultry farm, the income-expenditure balance of the Naya Bungablow Farm was favourable upto 1972-73. Rates were revised periodically to keep in line with market trends. During 1973-74, sales could not cover even the cost of feeds, Birds and eggs sold during these years were as follows :

	Numbers	
	Eggs	Birds.
1971-72	84340	16547
1972-73	60288	47030
1973-74	296777	11357

6.4 Birds sold include those given to the blocks for distribution free or at subsidized rate and these sold for table purposes. Table birds disposed declined from 7416 in 1972-73 to only 1263 during 1973-74. The higher number of birds sold has not doubt contributed towards balancing the accounts during 1972-73. The increased sales of eggs on the other hand has improved the receipts during 1973-74. But this was not enough to make up the short-fall in the sale of the birds.

Extension work by the Farm.

Poultry extension undertaken by the Naya Bungalow Farm comprised distribution of breeding birds, hatching eggs, distribution of feed, equipment and medicines and training of would-be poultry farmers. The farm, however, has no arrangement for follow-up with the beneficiaries and in fact this important part of extension programme is still outside the jurisdiction of the Farm.

7.1 Between 1970-71 and 1974-75, the Farm had given training to a total of 170 farmers in the techniques of modern poultry farming. These farmers were from the surrounding area as well as from elsewhere in the State. About 50 per cent of these in the surrounding

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area were selected by random to gauge the impact of the poultry scheme as follows :

	Number of Farmers Trained.		
	Total	From surrounding area of 8 kms. radius.	Selected for enquiry
1970-71	37	16	7
1971-72	28	6	4
1972-73	40	24	0
1973-74	37	15	14
1974-75	28	9	3
	170	70	34

7.2 The period of training was during December, January, February and March. The duration of the course was one month for a batch of trainees. Each trainee was given a stipend, the rate being Rs.75 during 1974-75. After completion of the course, each trained farmer was given 3-4 months old birds ranging from 20 to 30 in number, 1.5 to 2 quintals of feed, a watering trough and a feeding contraption and a bottle of medicine. The beneficiary spent Rs.30-40 for construction of the poultry house from his own pocket and Rs.20-30 on feed after the free feed supplied had run out. Of the 34 beneficiaries selected for interview, only 17 could be traced when the investigators visited during June & July, 1975. Those not found were learnet to have migrated Elsewhere for other occupations. Again out of the 17 located, one had just died on the date of visit and another was found seriously ill. The enquiry could be carried out ultimately in only 13 beneficiaries as two others included in the list had just come out of the training and yet to receive the birds.

7.3 Out of the 13 beneficiaries, only 5 were found to be still keeping poultry. None of them could maintain the original number received from the farm. The birds found with them varied from 5 to 23 in number. 4 of these beneficiaries were those who took the

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the training during 1973-74 and the other during 1972-73. None of the earlier trainees was keeping poultry any more. None of the trainees had taken up poultry as the sole or main occupation.

7.4 A total of 338 birds was given initially to the beneficiaries interviewed. The number of birds with these farmers during the enquiry added up to 70. The decline in the stock thus, works out of the extent of 80 per cent. The number of birds with those still having poultry was as below :

	Received initially	Remaining on Date of visit	Percentage.
Farmers No. 1	32	7	19
" No. 2	24	5	20
" No.3	28	20	72
" No. 4	25	23	92
" No. 5	25	15	60
	134	70	52

7.5 Only 3 out of 13 or 23 percent of the beneficiaries interviewed have a potential of flowering into a poultry farmer of some-sort. If we consider also those who could not be found, the figure would come down to less than 10 percent. As will be seen below, the staying power of the majority of the beneficiaries in poultry was very fragile. Very few had lasted more than 6 months.

Period of Retaining the Birds.	Number of Beneficiaries.	Percentage
2 months or less	1	8
3 months	4	30
5 months	1	8
6 months	5	38
1 year	2	16
	13	100

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7.6 The reason given by 30 percent of the beneficiaries was that as soon as one or two birds became blind or sick, they were afraid that the rest of the stock would also be attacked. So the easiest way of avoiding loss was to sell all the birds. None had sought veterinary aid and considered it worth the trouble as poultry was not the main source of income. None had tried to procure fresh stock when the disease had passed off. Some beneficiaries said that the birds fell sick quite often and as they could not give proper attention, they decided to give up poultry. Another group blamed the weather and as the exotic birds would not lay eggs during the cold months, it was better to dispose them of. None of these beneficiaries had replaced with local stock.

7.7 Since the birds were 3-4 months old at the time of delivery from the Farm, they would be 6 to 10 months old after remaining 3 to 6 months with beneficiaries. Birds in this age group could find easy market in this region for meat.

By this time, the free feed supplied by the farm would also have run out and further retaining the birds by the beneficiaries would have meant expenditure on feed from their own pocket. These consideration might also have been the alternative reason for early abandoning the poultry keeping by the majority of the beneficiaries. In fact, few of the beneficiaries had waited till the eggs laying stage and not to speak of multiplying. Only three farmers had reported receiving eggs and only one only hatchings. All this points to the lack of seriousness about poultry on the part of the trained beneficiaries.

7.8. The few beneficiaries who still kept poultry also complained that the birds obtained from the farm are too vulnerable to diseases. They have observed that the cocks have withstood better than the hens and were thinking of having a mixed or crossed breed. The egg result was much below the farm average and hatching negligible.

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8. CONCLUSIONS

Accurate assessment of the performance of the project can be possible if the records are complete and maintained in a systematic and clear manner. This has not been possible in the case of the Nayabungalow Poultry Farm. In respect of this farm, records were available both at the Farm and in the Directorate of Veterinary and Animal Husbandry for some aspects of the working of the farm. But in many respects, the records of the two sources differed substantially. For instance, the initial information on the average number of layers given by the farm for the year 1973-74 was 3039. Against this, the figure obtained from the Directorate was 475 at the beginning of the year and 1324 at year end giving an average of 900 layers. Relating these numbers to the number of eggs produced during the year we get an average of 116;263;743 and 392 eggs per layer for the year 1973-74. This necessitated further verification before the figures adopted were arrived at. Similar was the case with the numbers of birds maintained at the farm. While it is the duty of Evaluation to verify all possible information given, this was brought here only to emphasise the need for maintaining proper and sensible records by the Department. Without such records, it is difficult to visualize how the Department would be able to prepare realistic schemes for implementation.

2. The farm was over-staffed in all the three years studied. The larger number of staff and labourers engaged would have been justified if it was followed by larger number of birds kept, eggs produced, high survival rate of the birds or increased utilization of plants and equipment installed. More work should, therefore, be created for the existing man-power at the farm.

3. The mortality rate of the birds was alarming in all the three years. This high rate has occured when the farm was well-equipped with qualified staff and medicines. The death rates would be higher if calculated on the lower figures given by the farm for birds maintained. Whatever figures we adopted, the mortality rates surpassed the expectations of a scientifically managed farm. The Department should examine further the factors why such high rates could not be prevented.

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4. In hatching, poor results were obtained both in rates and in total numbers. This also occured when the farm has been upgraded to a central hatchery. The hatchings ratios obtained except for one year were not much different from those obtained by household rearers. The Department should see that the incubators are in full working condition otherwise it would be a waste to place more eggs in them.

5. The eggs production has vastly improved after setbacks in the earlier years. The level of 1973-74 should be maintained and improved further to be consistent with the general trends of a welfare State. The eggs performance per bird would appear still satisfactory even though this was the result of juggelery of figures of layers maintained at farm. The rate per layer was still above 100 eggs a year even if we adopt the maximum figures obtained.

6. The success of the scheme of distributing poultry units to the trained beneficiaries was far below the expectations. It would appear there was abuse of the scheme by the majority of the beneficiaries. Only a small minority have kept the birds till egg laying. The majority of the beneficiaries were not interested in keeping the birds beyond the point of getting maximum returns. This was the situation within 8 kilometres reach from the farm. It would look as if these beneficiaries were not poultry farmers at all. At best, these trained beneficiaries were intermediary between the farm and the real rearer, that is, if the birds did not go to pot. In which case, the only consolation is that they might have passed on the poultry know-how to the purchasers of the birds. According to the small minority of the beneficiaries who still continue poultry rearing, distribution of cocks only would be more advantageous. The Department may perhaps take a fresh look at the scheme. If the scheme is to continue, more effective and direct strategies of poultry extension would be evolved and sufficient follow-up with the beneficiaries should be made.

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