



A worker tends to chicken at Kabanyolo. Below is a yellow yolk. PHOTO RACHEL MABALA

Among others, poultry farmers face a challenge of low egg production. To combat this challenge experts say the secret is in the feeds. EDGAR BATTE explores the best feeds that bring best eggs.

# What you should do to get a yellow yolk from hens

must have a yellow-coloured yolk. This can be achieved by feeding birds on greens."

Any farmer rearing chicken knows that it is for business so they will be willing to do anything they can to get the most out of their enterprise. Poultry farmer Nice Nigigi knows this too well.

**Feeding regime** she adopted to get the chicken have the mixed feed she buys from the dealers and says the chicken have a free expression in her banana plantation.

That, they get a bit of both but they also go out, eat on some insects, banana peelings and when they lay an egg, it is as early as the morning sunset.

Ssekatawa, a veterinary says the quality of an egg is determined by egg size, egg shell strength, the size and shape of the egg yolk.

The colour of the egg depends on the diet of the birds. Birds lay eggs with a variation from that which can mean a disease that needs to be explained.

## Power and layers'

to Ugachick Poultry Mash is a recommended for young birds that are laying eggs.

Chicken and duck mash has a good nutrient balance that helps with feather development for eight weeks for the Ugachick is selling." Nigigi says the chicks can continue to grow when they fully

can be started on a diet that is optimal, in terms of egg weight or mass.

## Beware of diseases

Ssekatawa cautions that a farmer should be keen on keeping diseases out of the bay. "Some of the diseases that can cause change in egg colour include infectious bronchitis and Newcastle disease.



## INTRODUCE GREENS

Nice Barungi attests that feeding chicken on greens is supplementary and helps balance the diet. "My emphasis is on feeding and raising the hens organically have a special clientele that buys my eggs and hens for meat. I supplement what is already made with my own formulations for hens that are to stay long on farm," she explains.

She uses pellets and probiotics. "I get the yellow yolk through introduction of greens to the hens. Some greens I planted, some I employed a person to collect from swamps."

The veterinary doctor cautions, "The challenge is that some greens are poisonous and a farmer may not be able to select them. Our worries about this have been solved since proper feeds give a yellow yolk.

## Water for hens

Providing your hens with water is very straightforward, you just need to make sure they have access to clean, fresh water at all times. You can place the water in any sort of plastic container, but the easiest way is to buy a drinker. During the winter if you live in a colder climate, the water will probably freeze over during the evenings, so just make sure to break the ice up and clean out the bowl in the mornings.

## Shell strength

Presence of enough calcium in the feeds and ability of the bird to digest and convert will help the birds lay stronger eggs," he explains. He adds, "Calcium sources include oyster shells, lime stock feed, Di calcium phosphate and bones.

These help to improve digestion, absorption, appetite and utilisation of nutrients. A highly nutritious egg

## Reduce antibiotic usage

He encourages farmers to reduce antibiotic usage so that they can produce better quality of eggs for human consumption.

"This can be achieved when birds are fed on the recommended feeds and in water. The available proteins in the feed determine the size of an egg. The feed utilisation efficiency of the bird," he further advises.

The availability of proteins depends on the quantity and quality of protein sources in the feed.

Protein sources include silver fish, soya, sunflower, cotton seed cake, methionine, lysine, some of which can be available on the open market. It is the quantities the farmer should be sure about.

The quality and quantities of the above should be good for a bird to have good size of an egg. The veterinary doctor also explains that feed utilisation efficiency is the ability of the bird to properly digest, absorb and change almost all feed nutrient into product such as eggs and meat.

## Advice

"For a bird to properly digest food it must have enough water, sufficient enzymes, a healthy digestive system, and the bird should be well healthy.

**Note:** When a bird has any infection in the digestive tract, 70 per cent of the proteins it has goes to intestinal proliferation and 30 per cent for production," says Barungi.

Ssekatawa advises that a poultry farmer should always put right amounts of protein sources in feed, give birds 120-130 grams of feed per day and water to improve appetite, production of more enzymes improving feed conversion, improve the intestinal integrity, fight stress factors and keeping them healthy and profitable.

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AMOUNT OF MONEY A FARMER EARNS FROM AN ACRE