



State of Poultry Industry in India

For Prelims: [Livestock sector](#), [Environmental pollution](#), [Greenhouse gas emissions](#)

For Mains: State of Poultry Farming and Chicken Industry in India, Challenges, Issues Related to Poultry Farming and Way Forward.

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Why in News?

The **broiler chicken industry** in India has transformed from a **traditional, small-scale farming practice** into a **highly organised and vertically integrated** agri-business.

- This evolution has enabled even smallholders to participate in commercial poultry farming, significantly increasing productivity and profitability.

What are Broiler Chickens?

- **Broiler Chickens:** Broiler chickens are a type of chicken specifically bred and raised for meat production. Rearing of chickens comes under poultry farming.
 - **Advantages:**
 - **Rapid Growth Rate:** Broilers are genetically engineered to grow exceptionally fast, reaching slaughter weight in a relatively short period, typically 4 to 6 weeks.
 - **High Meat-to-Bone Ratio:** They have been selectively bred to develop large breast muscles, which are the most desirable part of the chicken for consumers.
 - **Efficient Feed Conversion:** Broilers efficiently convert feed into meat, making them economically viable for commercial production.
- **Poultry Farming:** Poultry farming is the practice of **domesticating and raising birds, primarily chickens, ducks, turkeys**, and geese, for the purpose of producing meat and eggs. It is a significant component of the agricultural sector worldwide.

What is the State of the Poultry Industry in India?

- **Global Ranking and Production:** According to Food and Agriculture Organization Corporate Statistical Database (FAOSTAT) production data (2020), India ranks **3rd in Egg Production** and **8th in meat production in the world.**
 - Egg production in the country has increased from 78.48 billion in 2014-15 to 129.60 billion Nos. in 2021-22. Meat production in the country has increased from 6.69 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 9.29 million tonnes in 2021-22.
 - **Broiler meat production** in the country is estimated at around **5 million tonnes (MT)** annually.
- **Poultry Feed Production:** In 2022, India's **total poultry feed production** reached **27 million metric tons** per year.
- **Growth Trends:** The poultry sector in India has shown impressive growth, with **poultry meat**

production increasing at an **average annual rate of 8%**, and **egg production** rising by **7.45%** between 2014-15 and 2021-22.

- **Market Size and Exports:** The Indian poultry market reached **Rs. 2,099.2 billion** in 2023, and it is projected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (**CAGR**) of **8.9%** from 2024 to 2032.
 - During the 2022-23, India exported poultry and poultry products to 64 countries, generating revenue of USD 134 million.
- **Top Egg-Producing States:** Andhra Pradesh (20.13%), Tamil Nadu (15.58%), Telangana (12.77%), West Bengal (9.93%), and Karnataka (6.51%).

What are the Key Factors Responsible for Rapid Growth of the Poultry Industry in India?

- **Vertical Integration:** Companies utilise **contract farming models**, providing farmers with **day-old chicks (DOCs)**, feed, and technical support.
 - This approach allows for **streamlined operations, reduced risks**, and enhanced control over the entire supply chain, from breeding to marketing, ensuring consistent quality and efficiency.
- **Technological Advancements:** The use of **Environmentally Controlled (EC) sheds with automated feeding**, and climate control systems has improved growth efficiency and reduced mortality rates.
 - Additionally, **advanced breeding techniques have enhanced growth rates** and disease resistance in broiler chickens.
- **Increased Demand for Poultry Products:** Growing urban populations and shifting dietary preferences, including a **trend towards more processed and ready-to-eat poultry products**, have driven the rising demand for chicken as a protein source.
- **Government Support and Policies:** Government initiatives, subsidies, and improved infrastructure for **transportation and cold storage have bolstered investment** and growth in the poultry sector, enhancing supply chain management.
- **Financial Incentives for Farmers:** The contract farming model offers **guaranteed payments and performance-based incentives**, boosting farmers' profit margins and encouraging larger operations.
 - Additionally, **loans and credit facilities from financial institutions** support poultry farming investments.
- **Export Opportunities:** The potential for exporting **poultry products to international markets** presents a dynamic opportunity for the Indian poultry industry.
 - However, this is also influenced by global market conditions, trade policies, and competition from other exporting countries.

What are the Challenges Related to the Poultry Industry in India?

- **Contaminated Environments:** High-density **confinement of chickens in battery cages** results in poor air quality, waste management problems, and **greenhouse gas emissions**.
 - Poultry units with over 5,000 birds are classified as polluting industries by the **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)**, necessitating strict regulatory compliance.
- **Feed Price Volatility:** Fluctuations in the prices of feed ingredients such as **corn and soybean can impact the profitability of poultry farming**. Ensuring a stable supply and exploring alternative feed sources are essential to address this challenge.
- **Cruel Treatment of Animals:** Industrial poultry operations often involve inhumane practices such as mutilation, starvation, and overcrowding, violating the **Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960**.
- **Financial and Operational Challenges:** The industry faces **issues such as large debts, reliance on informal facilities**, and complex contract farming arrangements. Farmers often incur **significant losses due to market volatility** and the pressures from industry giants.
- **Competition from Other Protein Sources:** The poultry market faces competition from other protein sources **like plant-based proteins**, which are gaining popularity due to health and environmental concerns.
- **Supply Chain Inefficiencies:** Inadequacies in the supply chain, including transportation, **cold**

storage, and distribution networks, can lead to wastage and affect the quality of poultry products, hindering market growth.

- **Waste Management Issues:** The poultry industry produces significant waste, including methane, **CO₂, water effluents, and solid waste, causing soil and water pollution.**
 - Excessive **manure accumulation exceeds land capacity**, leading to pollution and breeding grounds for disease vectors like flies and mosquitoes.

What are the Initiatives for the Poultry Industry in India?

- **Poultry Venture Capital Fund (PVCF):** The Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying is implementing it under “Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation” (EDEG) of the **National Livestock Mission.**
- **National Livestock Mission (NLM):** Different programmes under the NLM in which financial assistance is provided to States/Union Territories to implement Rural Backyard Poultry Development (RBPD) and Innovative Poultry Productivity Project (IPPP).
- **Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD) Scheme:** ASCAD under “**Livestock Health and Disease Control**” (LH&DC) which covers the vaccination of economically important poultry diseases viz., Ranikhet Disease, Infectious Bursal Disease, Fowl Pox, etc., including control and containment of emergent and exotic diseases like Avian Influenza.

Way Forward

- **Enhance Business Environment:** Improve the **ease of doing business** by addressing challenges related to **poultry product exports** and **integrating informal sector units.**
- **Invest in Research and Development:** Increase **investment in R&D** to drive innovation and advancements across the poultry sector.
- **Strengthen Environmental Oversight:** Enforce **stringent environmental regulations**, particularly in light of the **CPCB’s reclassification of the poultry industry as a highly polluting 'orange category' sector.**
 - This is crucial for addressing current challenges, such as the **bird flu crisis**, and mitigating the broader climate emergency.
- **Align Environmental and Animal Welfare Regulations:** Ensure that India's environmental laws and regulations reflect the **One Health principle**, integrating lessons from public health crises.
 - Emphasise the connection between animal welfare, public health, ecosystem integrity, and biodiversity conservation.
- **Social Awareness Campaigns:** The government should earmark funds for awareness generation through “**Social Awareness Campaigns**” which could sensitise the communities and population at large on major aspects related to poultry farming.

Drishti Mains Question:

What is the State of Poultry Farming in India? What are its challenges and the way forward?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q.1 Which of the following is the chief characteristic of ‘mixed farming’? (2012)

- (a) Cultivation of both cash crops and food crops
- (b) Cultivation of two or more crops in the same field
- (c) Rearing of animals and cultivation of crops together
- (d) None of the above

Ans: (c)

Mains

Q.1 Livestock rearing has a big potential for providing non-farm employment and income in rural areas. Discuss suggesting suitable measures to promote this sector in India. **(2015)**

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