



Popular Article

Domain: Agriculture Science

Vol 5 Issue 3, March 2026, 289-290

Feathers of Freedom: Poultry Farming Empowering Rural Women

Soni Kumari¹, Ranjana Sinha¹, Syed Mohmad Shah²

¹Bihar Veterinary College, BASU, Patna and ²Mountain Livestock Research Institute, Manasbal, SKUAST-Kashmir, Jammu and Kashmir

doi.org/10.5281/TrendsInAgriculture.19436721

Introduction

Poultry farming is emerging as a powerful tool for empowering rural women in India. Traditionally, women have been involved in rearing backyard poultry as part of their daily household activities. Today, this practice has evolved into a sustainable livelihood option that requires minimal investment, less space, and basic management skills. It is especially suitable for landless and marginal women farmers, enabling them to participate actively in income-generating activities without disrupting their household responsibilities.

Economic Empowerment

One of the most important benefits of poultry farming is the economic independence it provides to rural women. By selling eggs, meat, and chicks, women can earn a steady supplementary income. This income helps them meet household expenses, support their children's education, and handle healthcare needs. Over time, regular earnings also improve savings habits and financial stability. As women start contributing financially, their confidence grows, and they become less dependent on other family members.

Nutritional Security

Poultry farming also plays a vital role in improving the nutritional status of rural families. Eggs and chicken meat are rich sources of high-quality protein, essential vitamins, and minerals. Women who rear poultry often include eggs in their family diet, which helps reduce malnutrition, especially among children. Increased access to such nutritious food enhances overall health and strengthens food security at the household level.

Social Empowerment and Decision-Making

With financial contributions and increased awareness, rural women gain greater respect within their families and communities. Poultry farming enhances their role in decision-making related to household expenditures, children's education, and farming activities. Women become more confident in managing resources, marketing their products, and interacting with buyers. This shift leads to improved social status and greater participation in community activities.

Role of Self-Help Groups (SHGs)

Self-help groups have significantly strengthened poultry farming among rural women. These groups provide access to credit, training, and technical support, making it easier for women to start and expand their poultry enterprises. Through SHGs, women can share knowledge, reduce risks, and collectively market their products for better returns. Participation in such groups also fosters unity, leadership skills, and mutual support among women.

Skill Development and Entrepreneurship

Poultry farming helps women acquire valuable skills such as feeding management, vaccination, disease control, and marketing strategies. They also learn basic financial management and record-keeping. Exposure to improved poultry breeds like Vanaraja, Giriraja, and Aseel further enhances productivity. These skills gradually transform rural women into small-scale entrepreneurs, capable of running independent and profitable enterprises.

Low Investment and Easy Management

One of the key advantages of poultry farming is its low investment requirement. Women can start with a small number of birds and gradually expand their flock. Poultry can be reared using locally available resources, including kitchen waste and natural scavenging systems. Its flexibility allows women to manage poultry alongside their household duties, making it an ideal livelihood option.

Contribution to Rural Development

The empowerment of rural women through poultry farming has a positive impact on overall rural development. Increased income improves living standards, while higher egg and meat production contributes to local food security. Women-led poultry enterprises also create employment opportunities and strengthen the rural economy. As more women become self-reliant, the socio-economic condition of entire communities improves.

Conclusion

Poultry farming is not just a small-scale agricultural activity; it is a pathway to economic independence, better nutrition, and social empowerment for rural women. By providing income, building skills, and enhancing decision-making power, it transforms their lives and contributes to sustainable rural development. Promoting poultry farming through training, financial support, and government initiatives can further accelerate this positive change and help create a more inclusive society.