



# Global Leader Talk

## Editorial Meetup

*To meet rising demand for quality poultry products in coming years, India needs to incentivise and support quality feed production*

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India's livestock sector plays a crucial role in the country's agricultural and economic landscape, supporting the livelihoods of millions by providing employment, income and nutritional security. Poultry and livestock sector provides essential inputs for sustainable farming practices, ensuring the country's food security. This sector also grapples with a range of impediments, such as

inadequate feed and fodder, frequent occurrences of disease and the escalating impacts of climate change. Maintaining high quality and nutritional value throughout the feed to food chain is vital to supporting optimal performance. With the rising global population giving a boost to demand for animal protein, countries are focusing on producing high quality feed with limited resources. Poultry farmers should get the right price for his final produce throughout the year for making the farm businesses sustainable.

There is an urgent need for collaborative work between state animal husbandry departments, Indian Council for Agricultural Research, state veterinary universities and industry to ensure sustainable growth in poultry industry. The poultry industry valued at \$ 30 billion currently engages 2.5 million people from farm to retail outlets. At present here is also a short supply of quality manpower including vets in the poultry sector. During 2025, India is estimated to produce around 28 million tonne poultry feed. Most of the raw materials required for poultry feeds are produced in India. But we may face shortages in future, as the animal husbandry sector is growing much faster than the crop sector. India's poultry industry needs policy support in the form of allowing import of GM soybean / soybean meal and maize and also needs steps to boost production of key feed ingredients, the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) had also stated in Vision Document 2047 for Indian poultry sector. The sector, which is already growing at a healthy rate of 8% annually, could see further acceleration, CII had stated.

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Mr. Ricky Thaper is Joint Secretary, Poultry Federation of India. Mr. Thaper in his career of 40 years in Poultry, has attended several specialized courses, International Exhibitions and Conferences in USA, Canada, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Turkey, Singapore, Vietnam, Japan, England and several other countries. Mr. Thaper provides inputs to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Inflation Analysis Team on future price movements and food price outlook of poultry meat and feed at regular intervals. Mr. Thaper's dedication to animal care and enthusiasm for the poultry sector has earned him multiple awards at national and international events in last four decades. He is also Regional Advisory Council Member of Soy Excellence Center-India. Mr. Thaper has contributed write-ups on the poultry sector which have been published in national and international journals. He has also delivered several lectures on various national and international platforms.

Availability of good quality feed ingredients and their prices are major challenges for manufacturing of good quality compound feeds. Maize and soybean meal prices act as benchmarks for prices of other feed ingredients. Soybean meal is the main protein source in poultry feeds. Grains are used as a source of energy. Government present policies will continue to divert significant volumes of maize to ethanol production which will put pressure on maize prices. Small amount of maize is also exported from India.

**The industry associations have urged the Indian government to allow imports of GM maize and soybean / soybean meal with a fixed quota during off or non-harvesting season here so that it does not adversely impact the farmers' price realisation. Reduction in import duties on these feed ingredients in the poultry feed should be announced.**

Several south Asian countries including Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have already allowed imports of GM soybean / soymeal and maize.

When domestic feed prices go up, the government must allow imports of GM maize and soybean / soybean meal. In 2021, the Indian government had allowed imports of genetically modified soybean meal for a limited period to control prices. In future also, the government may allow imports if needed. There is also a need to increase area and yield of oilseeds as well. It will be a win-win situation. The country which imports about 57% of its edible oil consumption will decline if oilseeds production gets a boost. Adulteration of feed ingredients is a major issue. There are not enough quality control labs to test it. The futures trading and hedging of these agricultural commodities is not substantial. The feed ingredients are bought and sold through traditional channels. There is a need to change in crop patterns due to climatic change. So the role of agriculture scientists is very important.

There is also need to enhance efficiency in usage of available poultry feed resource use. These would be beneficial for policy-makers, government agencies, non-government organizations, intergovernmental agencies and development agencies, among others in formulating and implementing sustainable livestock development activities and in preparing and coping with climatic variations such as droughts, floods, severe winter weather events. There is need to integrate the quality control system in feed analysis. Scientists and feed industries must ensure that the quality control systems and good laboratory practices are used in feed analysis. Scientists have done studies on many unconventional raw materials but their availability and safety is more important.

Currently the Indian poultry sector is estimated to employ more than 6 million people either directly or indirectly. The small and medium size poultry farms are mostly engaged in contract farming systems under larger integrators. At present India is the second largest producer of eggs in the world with production of 149 billion eggs annually and is the fifth largest producer of poultry meat with chicken consumption is around 10 million metric ton per year. In India, the per capita consumption of eggs is 106 units per person per year and the per capita consumption of chicken is 7.4 Kg per person per year. Total broiler placement in India is approximately 5.5 billion per year, total Layer placement is approximately 300 million and the rural poultry (backyard poultry) in India is approximately. 45 Million. Broiler breeder's placement is approximately 55 million and Layer Breeders placement is approximately. 24 million.



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Prominent feed players have started building new feed mills with 40 to 60 tons per hour capacity feed plants. At the same time, small feed millers need to upgrade their feed milling technology. Starting degree courses in feed milling technology in veterinary colleges is the current need for poultry industry. India is making strides towards achieving the target of net zero carbon emissions by 2070 through many initiatives. These include areas like solar energy, green hydrogen, electric vehicles (EVs), waste-to-wealth, organic and natural farming. The country is also launching a domestic compliance carbon market to facilitate trading of carbon credits. Animal husbandry sector contributes to global warming due to the emission of greenhouse gases like methane and nitrous oxide. The Food Safety and Standard Authority of India (FSSAI) issued a directive specifying that all commercial feeds intended for meat and milk-producing animals must comply with the Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS) specifications. As more feed manufacturing companies start adopting the regulations, the lab infrastructure also needs to be further developed. There is a lack of National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)-accredited food & feed testing labs. India's population is around 1.4 billion and is projected to be approximately 1.53 billion by 2047. This increase in population directly correlates with the higher demand for food including eggs and chicken. Per capita poultry meat and eggs are expected to be 15 kg live weight and 200 eggs annually by 2047. Around 38 million tonne (MT) of broiler feed and 34 MT of layer feed will be required in 2047. At 30% penetration rate, cattle feed requirement will be around 90 MT in 2047. Fish and shrimp feed required will be around 7 MT in 2047. As animal nutrition must get due attention, especially at the policy level. The production of safe animal feeding should be the focus of an efficient livestock production system.