

Hands-on capacity building training on poultry feed processing with locally available ingredients

The poultry farming sector faces several challenges, particularly the high cost of commercial feed which affects profit margins, especially for resource poor small-scale and women beneficiaries. In response to these challenges faced by many poultry farmers and to provide a handy solution, International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), New Delhi provided recently a feed grinder and mixer to the schedule caste women beneficiaries of Balarampur village under Sonarpur block. The beneficiaries were earlier trained under DAPSC program of Eastern Regional Station, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata and mentored as well as motivated continuously by the scientists of ICAR-IVRI-ERS. A hands-on training program was organized on 17th August 2024 at Balarampur village focusing on different aspects of poultry feed processing and preparation of cheap but quality poultry feed using locally available ingredients. The training program was a collaborative effort between, ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Kolkata; Change Initiation, Kolkata and IRRI, New Delhi. The training was attended by nine (n=9) scheduled caste women poultry farmers from Balarampur. The participants were selected based on their involvement in poultry farming and the need for cost-effective feed solutions.

The primary objectives of the training were to demonstrate the idea and some knowhow on nutrient profile about different popular feed ingredients including locally available ingredients; to provide practical skills that can produce cost-effective feed and reduce the dependency on expensive commercial feeds, and thereby to enhance the profitability and sustainability of poultry farming for women beneficiaries.



The key personnel like Dr. Arnab Sen, Incharge, HoRC, ERS, ICAR-IVRI, Dr. Arun Das, Principal Scientist, ERS IVRI, Dr. Manik Pakhira, Associate Professor, Department of Avian Sciences, West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences, Kolkata and Mrs Jhumpa Ghosh, Change Initiative were present in the training.



The program included both theoretical and practical sessions covering understanding poultry nutrition, economic aspects of feed processing, feed ingredient selection, feed processing

techniques, and formulation of feed recipes. Dr Arnab Sen discussed the role of feed in poultry farming, its importance, the cost-benefit analysis of using locally available ingredients versus commercial feeds. He also focused on beneficiary clusters, sharing of knowledge and acquiring the skill for low-cost feed preparation are the key to the success of poultry enterprises. Dr. Arun Das stressed the importance of nutritional requirements of poultry through low-cost feed formulation and its impact in improving poultry health and productivity, in terms of meat and eggs.



During the interactive session, both theory and practical classes were taken by Dr Manik Pakhira, where participants were given an overview on various commercially as well as locally available ingredients suitable for poultry feed formulation.

Later Dr Pakhira also guided hands-on demonstrations on how to process these ingredients maintaining a proper ratio to prepare balanced poultry feed. The hands-on training also included various aspects of grinding, mixing, and storage techniques. At the end of this training, the participants were able to formulate feed as per the nutritional needs of their poultry, using the local ingredients available to them.

This training program generated outcomes like **skill development**, which are expected to lead to reduce feed costs, improved knowledge of feed formulation, increased self-reliance and reduced dependency on expensive commercial feeds;**economic impact**-this training is anticipated to have a positive impact on the economic conditions of the participants by lowering feed costs, thereby increasing profit and **positive feedback** -the feedback from the participants was



overwhelmingly positive. They appreciated the practical nature of the training, and the immediate applicability of the skills learned. Many expressed a sense of empowerment and confidence in managing their feed production.

The hands-on training program on poultry feed processing with locally available ingredients was a significant step towards addressing the economic challenges faced by women poultry farmers. By equipping them with the necessary skills to produce cost-effective feed, the program has the potential to improve their profitability and sustainability in poultry farming.