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Options for Native Chicken Production in Northeastern Thailand

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Abstract

Over the last decades, poultry-production technology in Asia has improved significantly, with rapidly increasing production. During the past 30 years, poultry egg production has increased six times and chicken meat supply has increased 14 times. Thailand is one of the world's leading countries for poultry egg and meat production, and worldwide, it is the 5th largest exporter of poultry meat. Also, the local per capita consumption of poultry meat is high, i.e., about 13.5 kg per year. Most of the meat is produced by high-performance races and hybrids; only 13% of the meat is obtained from native chicken.

The growth of the poultry industry in Thailand is dominated by large-scale producers and their contract farmers. Due to the high cost of production inputs, such as feed and drugs, and the control of the market by the contract companies, many individual farmers could not compete with the companies and had to give up chicken-meat production. For these individual farmers, a streamlined production of native chicken could be an option for alternative income generation and for the diversification of the agricultural production base. Native chicken meat is generally considered to be of high quality, and in the larger cities in the region there is a growing market for this type of meat. However, no reliable raising systems have been developed for native chicken, which ensure a regular supply of high-quality meat to the market.

The study aims to develop options for the improvement of indigenous chicken raising systems, based on an evaluation of the agricultural production systems of small-scale farmers and a detailed investigation of the performance of native chicken in comparison to commercial breeds and hybrids.

Keywords: Hybrid chicken, native chicken, Thailand