

## Duck Rearing in Polythene Pond

Ducks are water fowl. Ponds are essential for optimum production and management of ducks



in village condition. However, the least amount of water required for rearing a flock of duck is yet to be calculated with various models. Under ongoing NAIP (Component-3) sub project entitled "Sustainable livelihood improvement through integrated freshwater aquaculture, horticulture and livestock development in Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Sambalpur districts of Orissa" around 500 farmers of 28 villages of Odisha were motivated and trained to rear ducks for a continuous economic return. Most of the farmers

have small ponds who used those for both fish and duck production. But some farmers, those having no accessibility to any water bodies, have been guided successfully through a new model of "duck rearing in polythene ponds".

Sri Lokanath Dehury (village: Bhatunia, Keonjhar) and Sri Basant Kheti (Village: Putiapalli, Sambalpur) were inspired to maintain a flock of Khaki Campbell ducks inspite of having no ponds of their own. Day old ducklings (25 to Sri Dehuri and 40 to Sri Kheti) and feed for initial 10 days of brooding was supplied to both of them to initiate the practice. Both of them dug the soil in their backyard, mulched it with thick polythene and filled those with water. After 20 days when other farmers allowed their growing ducks to enter their ponds, Sri Dehuri and Sri Kheti guided their ducks to the polythene mulched ponds. Farmers offered kitchen waste, vegetable peels, leftover food and other feeding materials to the ducks throughout the day outside the water. They used to change the water of the artificial pond every week. Like other farmers they have constructed small night shelters for their flock close to their own house.



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The project scientists regularly monitored the health and growth status of the ducks. The ducks attained body weight of 1.46 kg (female) and 1.66kg (male) by 5th month of age and the first egg was found on 158th and 166th day of age in flocks of Sri Dehuri and Sri Kheti respectively. As advised by the scientists they disposed their male ducks in the local market within 10 days of initiation of laying in the flock and earned a sizable income (@ Rs 200-250/- each). They used to provide more feed to laying ducks along with calcium preparations supplied from project. It was recorded that from 6th month onwards egg production in the flock was more than 60 percent till completion of one year of age. They were selling the eggs (@ 5/- each) in the village itself without any difficulty besides consuming a few. It was recorded that both Sri Dehuri and Sri Kheti earned around Rs 11,000/- and Rs 18,000/- respectively within the year that aids to their livelihood.

Now, many other farmers of Sambalpur and Keonjhar districts have adopted the successful practice of Sri Dehuri and Sri Kheti and proved that for rearing a flock of duck, an artificial polythene pond may serve the purpose instead of a traditional village pond.

*(Source: Regional Centre, CARI, Bhubaneswar)*