

Broiler feeding guide | how much to feed broiler chickens, fast growth

Broilers are meat converters and to get the best out of them, you have to maximize their feed conversion efficiency.

Broilers eat a lot of feed but it is not a general rule that the more the feed the better the results. To efficiently use the feed eaten by the birds, you have to capitalize on the feed conversion ratio (FCR) which compares the amount of feed eaten in relation to the weight put on by the birds. Feed conversion ratio is higher in younger birds but decreases as the birds grow.

Maximizing FCR

To maximize the feed utilization efficiency of broilers, you need to develop a feeding programme in which during sometimes, the birds are given feed ad libitum and sometimes you withdraw feed from the birds for some time.

During week 1,2 and 3, feed the birds ad libitum because at this time the feed conversion ratio is high meaning that small feed eaten leads to a larger increase in body weight.

After week 3, you can give the birds restricted feed and this, you let the birds run out of feed during the hot hours of the day (11am to 4pm) and after serve them to feed through out the evening and night until the next morning. The restriction in feeding should not exceed 6 hours because as this happens the hens begin breaking down the stored fat in their bodies and they loose weight.

Chicken management

Always provide clean water to the birds all the time. This is easier when using automatic drinkers than when using manual drinkers.

Ensure to provide the broilers with cool water especially during hot weather to cool down their bodies. This prevents heat stress and sudden death of the birds.