

# **Cheap broiler chicken feed practices and temperature regulation**

In broiler poultry production, brooding and feeding are major challenges. Better practices in brooding and cheaper feeding practices help increase productivity of the business.

In management of chicks, ventilation is very important. We need to strike a balance between providing warmth to the birds and letting bad gases for example carbon dioxide, ammonia and carbon monoxide out of the poultry pen and we do this by curtain management where we raise or lower the curtain depending on the prevailing conditions.

## **Curtain management**

Curtains in brooders are raised or lowered depending on the chicks behaviours and the thermometer reading. When it is hot, you increase ventilation by lowering the curtain and when it is cold, reduce on the ventilation by raising the curtain but leave a space of about 15 cm to allow fresh air into the pen. It is a mistake increasing ventilation by raising the curtain from the bottom upwards because this drives away the accumulated heat.

Accumulation of ammonia in the poultry pen causes a bad smell in the pen, irritation of the hen's eyes and affects their respiratory system.

## **Feeding of birds**

From day 1 to 14, feed the birds on starter feed which contains 21% crude protein. This is very nutritious and helps in faster growth rate and development of organ systems in birds. From day 14 to 21, feed your birds on growers mash and

from day 21 to 28 feed the birds on finisher. Its important to rest your birds. Give them dark hours to have them rest and digest the feed.

For the first 5 days, mix an anti stress in the birds' water to relieve the birds from the stress. Ensure birds always have good quality drinking water at all times.

Do a crop feel test to check wether the chicks have been just feeding, drinking or both. If it feels hard, the chick has only been eating, if it feels very soft then the chick has only been taking water and if its porridge like then it has been doing both.