

Ostrich Farming | How to Start an Ostrich Farm

Ostrich belongs to a flightless bird family. The birds belonging to this family are the largest ones compared to all other bird species.

Ostriches originated in the 1860s in South Africa. However, there is contradictory information about their origin as evidence displayed that ostrich farming has its origins in Asian steps about 40-50 million years ago. There are five types of sub-species of ostriches known. They are; red neck ostrich, masai ostrich, black necked ostrich, blue necked ostrich and Arabian ostrich. However, Arabian ostrich became extinct.

Characteristics of the species

Ostriches are game animals, are omnivorous and their diet is based on shrubs, succulent plants, seeds and insects. They can live up to 30- 70 years. Males have black plumage with some white shades in the final part while females have shades of brown and grey.

Ostriches start mating at 2-3 years of age and they start laying eggs between the months of April and August.

Products and their use

Meat from ostrich is red with lower fat, cholesterol and calories. It is also a good protein source. The eggs are about six inches long and five inches wide weighing 2 kg. The ostrich egg is rich in protein with one egg equivalent to 25 chicken eggs. Their skins are used to make handbags, clothes, carpets.

The eggs shells can be used as water vessels and making

necklace beads. The feathers should be harvested when the bird weighs 60kg or more and are used to make dusters, hats and decorations.

Preference for ostrich

Ostrich is highly adaptable to harsh conditions, their feathers act as a good insulator minimizing amount of heat coming from direct sunrays. They can survive without drinking a lot of water and use their wings to dispose off heat during hotter seasons or keep themselves warmer during winter.

Lastly, the ostrich has acute hearing and eyesight from a distance of about 12 km hence farmers do not need preventive measures to protect their animals and they require little maintenance.