



## POULTRY INDUSTRY - GS III MAINS

Q. The Indian poultry industry has the inherent potential to become the world-leader. In light of the above statement, discuss the challenges and opportunities in India's poultry sector. (15 marks, 250 words)

**News:** *The poultry industry needs urgent reforms*

### What's in the news?

- In light of the public health crisis brought by the current outbreak of H5N1 and the climate emergency, it is crucial for addressing the challenges in the poultry industry and bringing about necessary reforms, so as to cater to the One Health Principle.

### Poultry Industry in India:

- Poultry refers to domesticated birds raised for various purposes, primarily for their meat and eggs.
- Some common types of poultry include chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese, and quails. It is one of the fastest-growing agricultural sub-sectors.

### Status of Poultry Sector in India:

- India is currently the world's third-largest producer of poultry meat and eggs, with an annual production of over 4.78 million tons of chicken and 129.6 billion eggs.
- The total poultry feed production in the country stands at 27M MT/year in 2022.

### Growth Rate:

- The poultry meat sector in India has been growing at an annual average growth rate of 8%, with egg production increasing by 7.45 % between 2014-15 to 2021-22.
- The India poultry market size reached INR 2,099.2 Billion in 2023, exhibiting a growth rate (CAGR) of 8.9% during 2024-2032.

### Top 5 Egg Producing States:

- Andhra Pradesh (20.13%), Tamil Nadu (15.58%), Telangana (12.77%), West Bengal (9.93%) and Karnataka (6.51%).

### Opportunities for the Poultry Sector in India:

#### 1. Export Potential:

- India has the potential to become a major poultry product exporter, especially in the Middle East and Southeast Asia.

#### 2. Growing Population and Rapid Urbanization:



- As India has become the country with the biggest population there is a growing demand for chicken and eggs.

### 3. Nutrition Security:

- As India is experiencing stunting and wasting, the poultry industry offers a major solution to it as both eggs and chicken have high nutrition.

### 4. Technology Adoption:

- Adoption of modern practices, such as improved breeding techniques and feed management, can increase production efficiency. Farmers are using AI techniques to enhance efficiency.

### 5. Fiscal Measures by the Government:

- 100% FDI permitted through automatic routes in the food processing sector.
- Concessional rate of Customs Duty is applicable on imported equipment under the project import benefits.
- Income Tax deductions on capital expenditure are allowed at the rate of 150% for setting up and operating cold chain or warehouses for storage of agricultural produce 100% income tax exemption is available to new food processing, preservation, and packaging units for the first 5 years of operation, and at the rate of 25%-30 thereafter.

### 6. Diversification in Farmer's Income:

- It acts as insurance against crop failures and increases the farmer's income.

## Challenges in the Poultry Industry:

### 1. Contaminated Environments:

- They are a result of cramming chickens in battery cages in high densities in unsanitary conditions resulting in air quality and waste problems due to the odour, particulate matter, and other greenhouse gas emissions.
- The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has classified poultry units with more than 5,000 birds as a polluting industry requiring compliance and regulatory consent to establish and operate.

### 2. Cruel Treatment:

- The operational activities at these industrial facilities cause unnecessary pain and suffering to the animals because of mutilation, starvation, thirst, overcrowding, and other ill-treatment.
- Keeping animals in intensive confinement constitutes a crime under the provisions of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act, 1960.

### 3. Industrial Constraints:

- The Poultry Industry is subject to large debts, informal facilities, contract farming, requires a very specialized skill set resulting in farmers finding themselves in huge losses and unable to exit the market.



- The farmers suffer due to market volatility and the prevalent practices pushed by industry giants.

#### 4. Antibiotics for Preventive Use:

- They are regularly given to birds as a prophylactic and growth promoter to maximize production and profit.
- Antibiotics classified as critically important by the WHO are also widely sold to farmers and are prescribed to day-old chicks to reduce the likelihood of disease and mortality.

#### 5. Unsanitary conditions:

- The unsafe and unhygienic conditions in which the farms operate have a detrimental effect on the health of animals and the welfare of the consumers too.
- The workers at these facilities and the people residing in the vicinity are also unduly impacted.

#### 6. Inefficient Waste Disposal Mechanism:

- Poultry Industry generates waste in the form of emissions in the atmosphere (methane and CO<sub>2</sub>), effluents in the water systems, and solid wastes in the soil.
- The amount of piled-up manure (fecal matter collected periodically by local farmers for use as fertilizer) exceeds the carrying capacity of the land and becomes a pollutant.

#### 7. Breeding Ground for Disease:

- The piles of waste becomes a breeding ground for disease vectors such as flies and mosquitoes which spread in the nearby areas spreading diseases. Residents are compelled to adopt measures such as spraying insecticides inside homes, leading to breathlessness and a nauseating smell.

### Key Government Initiatives:

#### 1. Mega Food Park Scheme:

- 42 mega food parks (35 approved) are being put up by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries with around 1,200 developed plots (of approximately 1 acre each) with basic infrastructure that entrepreneurs can lease for the setting up of food processing and ancillary units.

#### 2. Infrastructure Development:

- Scheme for Cold Chain, Value addition and Preservation Infrastructure and setting up/modernization of abattoirs (for Government abattoirs)

#### 3. Entrepreneurship Development and Employment Generation (EDEG):

- Poultry Venture Capital Fund under the National Livestock Mission to improve production of poultry and productivity of processing units through technology upgradation.

#### 4. Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD):





- It will have activities for vaccination against economically important diseases of livestock and backyard poultry duly prioritized by the State/UT as per the disease prevalence and losses to the farmers.

## Way Forward:

### 1. 269th Law Commission of India Report 2017 Guidelines:

- It laid down certain guidelines as per existing laws and international best practices for animal care, waste management, and antibiotic use, among others.
- It contained evidence that non-therapeutic antibiotics given to poultry cause antibiotic resistance since living conditions are unhygienic.
- It further said that with more open, cleaner, and ventilated living spaces, animals are less likely to need constant antibiotics, making their eggs and meat safe for consumption.

### 2. Environmental Regulations:

- Strict oversight for compliance and enforcement of environmental regulations is necessary given the CPCB's reclassification of the poultry industry as a highly polluting 'orange category' industry.

### 3. Focus on One Health and Nutrition:

- Consumer awareness of the nutritional benefits of poultry products and also its antibiotic-free status needs to be heightened to secure responsibly sourced, high-quality protein.

### 4. Emphasis on Biosecurity and Feed Hygiene:

- Biosecurity measures and feed hygiene play a pivotal role in preventing diseases, ensuring optimal growth, and ultimately safeguarding the sustainability of the poultry industry.

### 5. Feed Milling and Quality of Feed:

- The poultry industry increasingly recognizes the importance of pellet durability, optimizing throughput, minimizing energy consumption, good steam quality, proper water activity, and moisture optimization processes to improve feed quality.

By addressing key challenges and implementing strategic initiatives, the Indian poultry industry can achieve sustainable growth, enhance biosecurity measures, and strengthen its competitiveness in the global market.