

How to start a poultry farm (Part 2)

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Many people would like to start a poultry farm, but do not know where to start. This will depend on the number of chickens that you want to keep. If you want to start a commercial business, you must have land or space available. If you do not have a farm and must buy one, you must remember that where your farm is, is very important.

When you buy a poultry farm, you must remember the following:

- The farm must be close to the market for lower transport costs.
- The farm must be close to your feed, medicine and equipment suppliers.
- If you rear broilers, the farm must be close to an abattoir, so that chickens do not die when they are transported to the abattoir.
- You must ensure that you have good roads leading to the farm, so that you do not have problems getting stock, such as feed and medicine. You will also be on time to deliver your product to the market, so you can get the best prices and keep your contracts.
- Your farm must not be against a steep slope. If the slope is too steep, you will have to do a lot of digging when you build. This will cost a lot of money.
- The farm must have good drainage to prevent water build-up. This will ensure that you do not create a home for flies and mosquitoes on your farm. These insects can make your chickens sick.
- The farm must have enough clean water. If you give your chickens dirty water, they will get sick and you can lose money.
- The farm must not be too close to other poultry farms. Diseases spread more often where there are many poultry farms around.

If you already have a farm, or you have bought a new farm and want to start a poultry business, the following is very important:

- Good farm roads on the farm are important. If you do not have good roads on the farm and you cannot get to and from the housing, you will not be able to provide your market.
- Good drainage around the housing is important. It keeps the soil from becoming muddy, prevents diseases from spreading and helps to get to and from the houses.
- There must be at least 20 metres between two houses, or six times the roof's height. This will prevent diseases spreading between the houses.
- Where you consider different age groups (adult and young chickens), the housing must be at least 100 metres apart. Older chickens already have good immune systems, while younger chickens can get diseases very easily from the older chickens.
- Only people working in the poultry housing should go into the house. No-one else may be allowed as people spread many diseases.
- Make your farm safe by putting up fences around the farm and chicken houses to protect your chickens from predators, as well as any illegal entry to your houses.
- You must provide decent toilet facilities to ensure that you have a good biosecurity programme. **UM**