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## **Research Paper**

### **Chicken Production and Marketing Systems in Enkulal Watershed, Dera District, Amhara Region, Ethiopia**

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## ABSTRACT

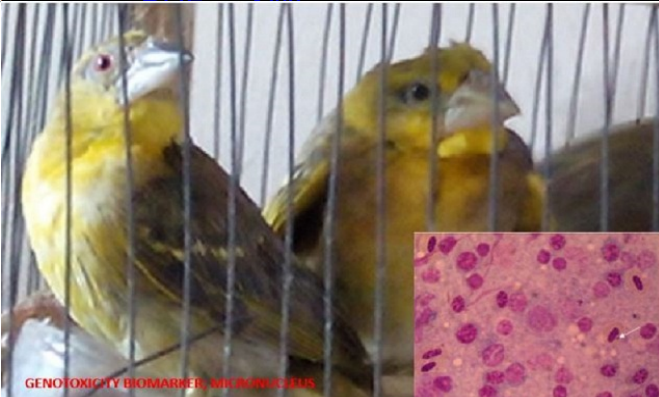
A survey was conducted at Enkulal watershed, which is found in Dera District, Amhara Region, Ethiopia. The watershed was one of the sites of Tana Beles watershed development project. The main objective of the study was to characterize the existing chicken production and marketing system of the watershed. A total 52 randomly selected chicken owners were used for the study. According to the results, there were three chicken production systems in the study areas, scavenging only (3.8%), scavenging with seasonal feed supplementation (65.4%) and scavenging with regular feed supplementation (30.8%). The dominant (95.8%) chicken breeds were local ecotypes. The average chicken flock size per household was 5.8. The first, second and third purposes of chicken were; selling for cash income (48.1%), egg hatching (26.9%), home consumption (69.2%), respectively. Similarly; the first, second and third purposes of eggs were; hatching (48.1%), selling for cash income (55.8%), home consumption (71.2%), respectively. The result indicated that only 11.5% of respondents prepared separate chicken houses for birds and the rest (88.5%) kept birds in various night sheltering places like; inside their house (82.7%), under basket (3.8%) and under local sitting place (1.9%). The average age of cockerels at first mating and pullets at first egg were 26.3 weeks and 28.5 weeks, respectively. The survey revealed that 96.2% of chicken owners experienced disease problems in their area, mainly Newcastle disease (100%). The average number of eggs laid/clutch was 14.3 and the number of total clutch periods/hen/year was 3.73. Accordingly; the annual egg productivity of hens, under the existing management condition was 53.4 eggs/hen. The average hatchability performance of hens was 82.5%. However, survivability was low (61.5%). Seasonal diseases outbreak was the major (86.9%) cause for mortality in the watershed. Seasonality of prices was the major (85.6%) chicken and egg marketing constraint in the areas.

**Key words:** Village Chicken, Production Systems, Local Chicken, Scavenging

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