

might expand at a considerably faster pace, as it did in Jordan.

4. The breakdown of cost outlay shows that feed accounts for about 65 percent of broiler and egg cost. It is followed by the cost of chicks and pullets (20% and 22% respectively). This means that any serious attempt to reduce costs should be addressed mainly to feed, chicks and pullets.
5. The cost of hired labour is almost zero in broiler farming, and very low in egg farming. About 80 percent of all poultry farms do not use hired labour at all. Furthermore, the vast majority of poultry raisers are actively involved in other professions, while leaving most of the work needed for their poultry to other members of the family who have low alternative employment opportunities. This has not only reduced costs, but has also minimized out-of-pocket losses and provided needed flexibility in case of crises.

Problems

1. Unreliable supply of baby chicks. Poultry raisers face a chronic problem of inadequate supply of baby chicks, and their orders are only partly met. Israeli hatcheries give priority to Jewish customers and they may, should the need arise, cancel outstanding West Bank orders without advance notice. Although not expressed officially, it has been made clear to the researcher that the Israeli Poultry Board and the Department of Agriculture appear to have placed a ceiling on chicks to be supplied to West Bank poultry farms, which is much lower than their actual production capacity. Importing chicks from other sources, on the other hand, is forbidden.
2. Inadequate control on the quality of baby chicks and feed. There are strong suspicions that the quality of chicks

sold in the West Bank is not adequately supervised, since some hatcheries may sometimes sell chicks of inferior quality, which otherwise may not be approved for sale in Israel.

Likewise, the quality of feed procured from some small mills in Israel and the West Bank is not adequately controlled. This can lead to occasional cases of adulteration, causing substantial losses to producers. It should be noted in this connection that quality of chicks and feed sold in Israel is subjected to quality control measures which are far more stringent than those practiced in the occupied territories.

3. Unsatisfactory technical and credit services. The poultry industries in Israel and Jordan are served by a full range of highly sophisticated institutional services. This includes qualified extension staff, a modern and prompt veterinary service, an efficient marketing structure, and sufficient credit facilities. The situation for all such services in the West Bank is, in the researcher's view, very unsatisfactory. Besides being not particularly well trained in poultry, extension agents are explicitly instructed in their work manuals to restrict their services to advice "if they are approached by farmers".¹ In other words they are asked to display little interest in developing poultry. Veterinarians working in the Department of Agriculture have also reduced their services to a very low level.

Credit facilities for medium and long term purposes almost came

1. Annual Plans for 1980-81, (Bet Eil: Department of Agriculture in the Military Headquarters), p 5.