



The Kuroiler Breed

Tadelle Dessie and Fasil Getachew

Introduction

The African Chicken Genetic Gains Project (ACGG) is led by the International Livestock Research Institute and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF). The project tests selected chicken strains for egg and meat productivity, adaptation and preference by farmers in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Nigeria under semi-scavenging and intensive management conditions.

Selection of chicken strains for testing was based on prior knowledge of their productive performance in different tropical countries. The Kuroiler breed has been identified as such a strain, and will be evaluated in all three African countries. This factsheet outline the history of the breed, its characteristics and its potential in increasing smallholder farmer incomes in Ethiopia, especially women, lifting them out of poverty.

Origins of the Kuroiler

The Kuroiler—a hybrid chicken developed in India by Keggfarms Private Ltd—was introduced on the market in early 1990s. “Kuroiler,” is an acronym derived from the words ‘Keggfarms’, ‘curry’ and ‘broiler’. It is widely believed—though not confirmed by the company developing the breed due to intellectual property rights—that Kuroilers originate from crossing Rhode Island Red, White Leghorn, Barred Plymouth Rock and two Indian indigenous chicken breeds with some broiler blood infusion to obtain specific broiler characteristics. Kuroilers have been successfully exported to countries such as Uganda.

Characteristics of the Kuroiler

- A dual-purpose breed producing meat and eggs;
- Multi-coloured in appearance and highly preferred by smallholder farmers, also useful for camouflage;
- Hens attain 2.5 kg within 12 months, begin laying eggs at five to six months, and then lay

150–200 eggs during their 12–16 month egg-laying period, initially more than 20 eggs per month (Keggfarms);

- Males reach 4kg in 12 months and weight at least 1kg at around three months, at which point they could be sold for meat if the owner chose;
- The breed thrives well on household waste, scraps, and vegetation and, thus, does not compete with the poor for grain or require any special feeding; and
- The colour of the egg is distinct shade of brown (tan) with bright yellow yolk.



Kuroiler performance in Africa

In 2011, a pilot project was started in Uganda to test the Indian model using Kuroiler chickens. The vision of the Uganda project was to reduce poverty and improve the quality of life for rural households. Anecdotal evidence and scientific reports indicate Kuroilers have successfully coexisted with local chickens in the country, while significantly outperforming them in both egg and meat production.

The Kuroiler is not a new breed to Ethiopia. It was imported from India by Ethio Chicks Private Ltd in 2011 and distributed to rural farmers to increase egg and meat production. Information on Kuroiler performance under semi-scavenging and station conditions in Ethiopia is, however, inconclusive and requires further evaluation.

ACGG plans to undertake on-station and on-farm chicken performance tests on a total of nine introduced chicken breeds and at least two local chicken strains from each of the three project countries (Tanzania, Ethiopia and Nigeria). A total of 15 sub-national zones, 56 districts, and 7500 low-income smallholder farming households will participate during the on-farm test. A minimum of two stations in each country will be used to evaluate the chicken strains under controlled management conditions.

Bibliography

Ahuja, V., Dhawan, M., Punjabi, M. and Maarse, L. 2008. Chickening out of Poverty? Story of 'Kuroiler' from India. Presented at International Conference

Ahuja, V., Dhawan, M., Punjabi, M. and Maarse, L. 2008. Poultry based livelihoods of rural poor: Case of Kuroiler in West Bengal. Report from the South Asia Pro Poor Livestock Policy Programme. (Available online: drcsc.org/MET/library/Animal/Bk-Poultry-Based_Livelihoods.pdf)

Phys.org. 2012. Raising Kuroiler chickens: Moving Ugandans beyond cyclical poverty. (Available online: phys.org/news/2012-09-kuroiler-chickens-ugandans-cyclical-poverty.html#jCp)

Keggfarms (India)—Which Came First, the Kuroiler™ or the KEGG™? (Available online: documents.tips/documents/keggfarms-india.html); for more information on the program, and to find out about future development and performance of the Kuroiler breed in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Tanzania, go to: <http://africacgg.net/>

Isenberg, D. 2007. Keggfarms (India)-Which Came First, the Kuroiler or the KEGG? Case Study #9-807-089. Harvard Business School: Massachusetts, USA. (Available online: keggfarms.com/pdf/Harvard%20Business%20School%20Case%20%20Study%20807089%20-Keggfarms_India-%208-21-07.pdf).

The International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) works to improve food security and reduce poverty in developing countries through research for better and more sustainable use of livestock. ILRI is a member of the CGIAR Consortium, a global research partnership of 15 centres working with many partners for a food-secure future. ILRI has two main campuses in East Africa and other hubs in East, West and Southern Africa and South, Southeast and East Asia. ilri.org

CGIAR is a global partnership that unites organizations engaged in research for a food-secure future. CGIAR research is dedicated to reducing rural poverty, increasing food security, improving human health and nutrition, and ensuring more sustainable management of natural resources. It is carried out by 15 centres that are members of the CGIAR Consortium in close collaboration with hundreds of partner organizations, including national and regional research institutes, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector. cgsar.org ilri.org

For more information on the program, and to find out about future development and performance of the Kuroiler breed in Ethiopia, Nigeria and Tanzania, go to: <http://africacgg.net/>

Tadelle Dessie and Fasil Getachew work for the International Livestock Research Institute.

African Chicken Genetic Gains is an Africa-wide collaboration that uses genetics so the continent's smallholder can get more productive chickens.
Contact: Tadelle Dessie, ILRI Ethiopia, t.dessie@cgsar.org, <http://africacgg.net>

Patron: Professor Peter C Doherty AC, FAA, FRS

Animal scientist, Nobel Prize Laureate for Physiology or Medicine—1996

Box 30709, Nairobi 00100 Kenya
Phone +254 20 422 3000
Fax +254 20 422 3001
Email ilri-kenya@cgsar.org

ilri.org
better lives through livestock

ILRI is a member of the CGIAR Consortium

Box 5689, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
Phone +251 11 617 2000
Fax +251 11 667 6923
Email ilri-ethiopia@cgsar.org

ILRI has offices in East Africa • South Asia • Southeast and East Asia • Southern Africa • West Africa



This publication is copyrighted by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI). It is licensed for use under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence.

March 2016