

Himsamridhi, a location specific rural chicken variety for Himachal Pradesh released

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A promising dual purpose location specific rural chicken variety, *Himsamridhi* suitable for rural/backyard poultry farming for hilly region was released by Dr. R. S. Gandhi, Assistant Director General (Animal Production & Breeding), ICAR-New Delhi, Dr. R.N.Chatterjee, Director, ICAR-DPR, Hyderabad and Prof. A. K. Sarial Vice-Chancellor, CSKHPKV on the occasion of Annual Review Meeting of AICRP on Poultry Breeding and Poultry Seed Project held at CSKHPKV, Palampur today.

The new variety was developed under All India Coordinated Research Project on Poultry Breeding, Palampur Centre coordinated by ICAR – Directorate of Poultry Research, Hyderabad. These birds have attractive Reddish-brown coloured plumage, perform better on low plain of nutrition, good growth, early feathering, early start of egg laying, good escaping ability and better adaptability to agro-climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh. Birds weigh around 1500-2000 g at 20 weeks of age under backyard system. The age at first egg is 24 weeks and the hens lay brown shelled eggs weighing around 52-55 g at 40 weeks of age. The birds have demonstrated potential to lay 180 eggs under farm condition and 140-150 eggs under backyard system. This variety can provide higher supplementary income and nutrition through both egg and meat to rural and tribal people of the state in far off remote areas hither to neglected in poultry development. The birds are well accepted by farmers with good feedback on performance. For developing such a bird, several improved stocks available in the country and local native poultry germplasm (selected and procured from different location of state and refined for reddish brown plumage phenotype) were initially evaluated for their performance, adaptability and suitability to meet farmer's requirements. The 2-way and back crosses were developed and evaluated. Ultimately, the crossbred stock {(DRXN) X DR} having Dahlem Red and native inheritance was identified as ideal bird to meet farmer's preference. This stock was comprehensively evaluated under farm and farmer's field condition from mid to high hill conditions of the state, further refined and is now being propagated as suitable poultry stock throughout the state. The CSKHPKV, Palampur centre had evaluated this variety twice in the last 2 years.

DND / *Himsamridhi* Female and Male birds



Himsamridhi field birds



Himsamridhi farm Flock



At the beginning, 30000 chicks of this stock were supplied to about 450 farmers in small backyard units of 50-100 chicks in different regions of state including high altitude cold temperate tribal areas of Bharmaur in Chamba, Kinnaur and Lahaul of Lahaul- Spiti. The farmers have expressed satisfaction on the performance of birds. The variety offers a bright scope for improving livelihood condition of tribal/rural farmers of Himachal Pradesh.

Dr. Arjava Sharma Director, NBAGR, Karnal and other university officers were also present during the occasion.