

Elevated platforms as enrichment material



The enrichment material offered by this good practice consists of elevated platforms with easy access, such as ramps, for the broiler chicken at all stages of their growth at the poultry farms. These platforms are aimed at mitigating the occurrence of leg injuries resulting from rapid growth due to genetic selection and support species-specific behaviour, for instance, perching and resting. Modern fast-growing broilers spend excessive periods resting and their activity further decreases with age. Inactivity has been suggested to affect walking ability and the incidence of leg disorders negatively. Elevated platforms bring additional possibilities for locomotion to broilers and seem to improve their leg health. The platforms are incorporated into the barns before the arrival of the chicks, and it has been immediately observed that they climb onto them. The platforms are made of plastic material by the farmer using old slats from hen farms. Their size is approximately 3 x 0.70 m, and the ratio is 0.3m²/1000 chickens. No improvement has been quantified or observed regarding productive rates or the level of injuries.

