

# Opportunities in the East-African poultry sector

The Dutch Poultry Centre (DPC), the Netherlands-African Business Council (NABC) and VIV worldwide recently organised the Poultry in East-Africa Event symposium, which featured farmers and ambassadors from Rwanda and Uganda.



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The meeting revolved around the opportunities in these African countries for poultry farmers and agro-processing companies worldwide. With a global increase in demand for poultry and eggs in countries with growing populations and an increase in wealth, it follows that there is an opportunity for production growth. East-Africa has such opportunities. As its poultry sector matures and professionalises, it can overcome the challenges.

During the event, Ambassador of the Republic of Uganda Embassy in Brussels accredited to Europe, Mirjam Blaak Sow gave a presentation about *Investment Opportunities in Uganda*. According to her, Uganda offers great opportunities for investment by poultry farmers around the world. “We have a very liberal economic system. Our economic growth is currently an average of 5.4% annually, which will increase due to the oil and gas discoveries.” She also added that one of the great advantages of Uganda is that you have no obligation to work with Ugandan companies to set up a poultry farm, as is the case in many other countries worldwide.

## Investment and trade opportunities

Blaak Sow highlighted that there is a lack of knowledge and skills in poultry management and of capital to put the necessary infrastructure in place. The Poultry Association of Uganda is trying to become more professional to assist in developing the poultry sector. There is an incentive regime for investors in Uganda like duty- and tax-free import on plant and machinery.

One of the poultry farmers present during the event in Barneveld was Anzoa Clara Aya of Aya Mixed farm in Uganda. She has between 3,000 and 5,000 birds. She offered her experience as a farmer and outlined the challenges that one will face.

She went on to give suggestions on how the government can help to assist farmers: “The government of Uganda can, for example, eliminate or reduce taxes on poultry products, facilities and other inputs and give grants to support commercial poultry farmers, strengthen the National Poultry Farmers Network or consortium to promote poultry business.”

## Looking for farmers

Jean Pierre Karabaranga, ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda in the Netherlands, said that Rwanda is a huge consumer of poultry products. “Currently we import no less than 70% of these products from other African countries. We now import 50% of our poultry products from Uganda. We have too few poultry companies in our country and want poultry farmers from the rest of the world to come to us. Like Uganda, we would also like a poultry industry, but builders and designers are also welcome.”

## Feed production situation

Adriaan Vernooij, researcher at Wageningen UR in the Netherlands, conducted a study on behalf of the Food and Business Knowledge Platform and he found that if we look at the challenges in animal feed, the cost price for most poultry products is determined mainly by the feed cost and day-old chicks. “The market for poultry feed ingredients is quite complex with multiplicity of ingredients that are seasonally available,” said Vernooij. The prices aren’t consistent and the quality cannot always be guaranteed. Wageningen University, with NABC (Netherlands Africa Business Council) and Agri Pro Focus will set up a pilot programme in the second half of 2017 in Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda.

This will be a comprehensive study of the prices for complete compound feed available in the local market. The results will be known in 2018 upon which a decision will be taken to broaden the study to other regions in Africa as well.

Jean Claude Ruzibiza, a poultry farmer in Rwanda and president of the country’s national poultry association thinks that the most important development in the Rwanda poultry sector is the professionalisation of the business, based on a good management system and using skilled staff, good quality chicken and feed, and to improve production. “It’s important that the Rwandan government invests in chicken feed ingredient research and develops the practical skills of students in veterinary institutions, through internship and educational centres,” said Ruzibiza. – *Poultry World*

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