

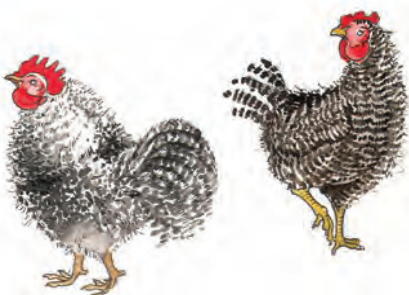
## Common chicken genotypes



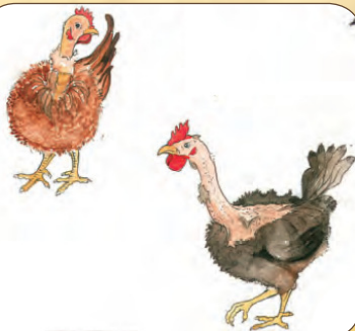
Dwarf



Normal



Frizzled  
Feathered



Necked Neck



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## INDIGENOUS CHICKEN SELECTION AND BREEDING





## Chicken Selection

Selection of healthy chicken is important to ensure a healthy flock with high productivity. It is important to look for different features in chicks, growers, hens and cocks. Select or buy new chicken early in the day, as stress from lack of water, feed and rest, will make them look sickly.



## The key features to look for in chicks are:

- Shiny, dry, thick and coloured down feathers
- Soft belly
- A clean navel and clean feathers around the vent
- Thick shanks with spaced and straight toes
- Big clear eyes
- Lively behaviour

## The key features to look for in growers, layers and cocks are:

- Healthy appearance
- Shiny normal feathers
- Larger size than birds of the same age
- Clear shiny eyes
- Clean, dry beaks and nostrils
- Clean feathers around the vent
- Straight legs and toes
- Males are large relative to the hens and mostly alert and protective

Additional features to look for in layers are:

- A red comb (more coloured when in lay)
- Pale legs when in lay
- The breastbone should not be too sharp



## Breeding

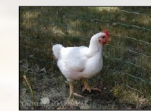
Breeding is the process of mating selected individuals based on desired traits/characteristics. The result is a breed with unique features inherited from parents. Features such as the colour of the comb and feathers, ear lobes and shank are usually determined by the parents. A breed could have variations in plumage colour.

## Commercial chicken

Chicken in commercial systems are usually kept for either egg production, meat production or both. It is important to select chicken suitable for a specific production system and environment. Some of the common breeds in Kenya include; KALRO, Kenbro, Sasso, Kuroiler, Isa Brown, Rainbow Rooster, and Cobb 500 among others. Common features in these chicken breeds are indicated in the pictures below:



*Layers are "boat-shaped" with a strong straight back.*



*Meat chicken e.g. broilers have long-legs and are, more upright with more developed breast muscles.*



*A dual-purpose breed e.g. KALRO improved chicken is a form in between the layers and meat chicken.*

## Common chicken genotypes

Frizzled feathers, naked-neck, dwarf and the normal type are commonly found in warm regions. Naked-neck and frizzled feathers are likely to be a natural adaption to heat stress. Dwarf tend to be two-thirds of the normal chicken size, mostly because of the short shanks.

