

The demand for chickens and eggs varies seasonally and regionally, and poultry prices (like those of other Pakistani agricultural products) fall significantly with increased supplies. The current price of chickens at Lyallpur (Spring 1963) is about Rs 1.50 per pound. Hence a four-pound bird would sell for about Rs 6—a fifty percent excess over the estimated Rs 3.50 to Rs 4.50 direct cost of production. Eggs sell for approximately Rs 2.50 per dozen, which is also greater than the direct costs of production.

Thus, if supplies of balanced feed and chicks can be made available in sufficient quantity when needed, if disease can be controlled, and if farmers can be taught the necessary management skills, then poultry production can help to improve diets and increase rural incomes.

### Fresh-Water Fish Alternatives

Still another way in which per capita production of animal proteins could be increased is through inland fish culture. For example, to increase the per capita consumption of proteins by five grams per person per day for one million people would require about 12,000 tons of fish annually.

Fish culture in West Pakistan has been much less extensively practiced than in East Pakistan where fish constitute a major part of rural diets. However, there seems to be no fundamental reason why fish could not contribute greatly to the diet of the West Pakistanis, even though the increasing salinity in drainage lakes, the marked annual temperature fluctuation, and other complex and changing conditions will require the culture of species than can flourish in a wide range of environments.

One previous difficulty has been in failing to coordinate fish culture with irrigation. Apparently brood and fry fish often are lost because of the mode of operation of the water supply. This difficulty presumably could be corrected in test areas. As a matter of fact the water-covered area in the canals now existing in the Indus Plain could in principle be made to provide enough fish to raise the per capita consumption of animal proteins by one or two grams per day; however the operation of only some of the perennial canals as fisheries is likely to be practical.

In addition to canals, a partial survey shows about 118,000 acres of existing ponds, bheels, swamps, etc. ranging from large lakes to small tanks. Even without improvement, these pond waters of West Pakistan could be expected to yield about 300 pounds of fish per acre annually. Intensive fish culture could raise this to 1000 or more pounds per acre per year.