



University of Georgia

FeedMix App Aims to Help Small Farmers Optimize Flock Health

Providing the correct balance of nutrients can be challenging for chicken farmers who mix their own feed. Nutritional imbalance can lead to malnourished or stressed chickens. Justin Fowler, an assistant professor at the University of Georgia, recently released a mobile app that will help poultry producers mix feed ingredients to maintain a healthy flock.

Fowler developed the app after working with the emerging poultry industry in Ghana. He was one of a delegation of UGA poultry scientists who traveled to Ghana to help the Ghana Association of Poultry Farmers set up a Cooperative Extension-style continuing education program for poultry farmers.

The number of poultry farms in Ghana is growing, but most farmers only raise a few hundred birds at a time. In 2015, Ghanaian farmers produced approximately 2.1 million broilers on 1,508 farms. About 2,900 Ghanaian poultry farms raise laying hens and sell eggs, according to a 2016 study by the USAID.

Ghanaian poultry farmers who mix their own feed do so from ingredients that are very similar to U.S. producers' ingredients. The mix mainly consists of corn and soybean meal.

During Fowler's trips to Ghana, farmers often asked him about the health of their flocks to which he would respond with questions about the chickens' nutrition. "They'd tell me, 'We just make our feed ourselves; we don't know what nutrients are in it,'" Fowler said.

After those visits to Ghana, Fowler collaborated with developers to create a simple app to help producers know exactly what they are feeding their birds. FeedMix, funded by a grant from the World Poultry Foundation, was released in August 2016.

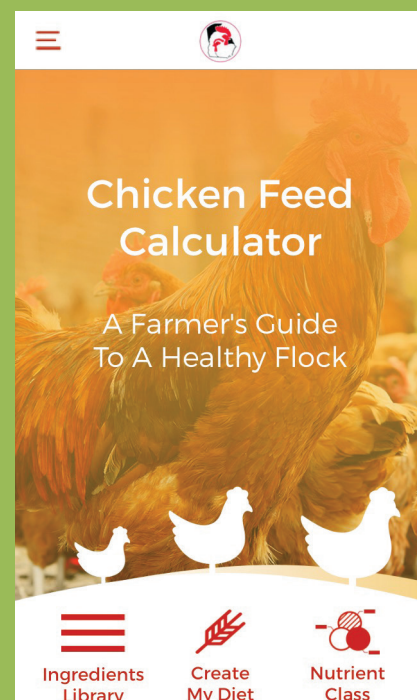
"This app allows them to enter in what they're mixing into the feed, and it will give them information about the nutrient

balance of that mix" said Fowler.

"Pretty much every farmer we talked to had a (smart) phone," Fowler said. "The advantage of this technology is that it provides immediate feedback to producers who are on a small enough scale that they may not have a good handle on exactly what kind of nutrition they are providing their flocks."

FeedMix is the second app released by the UGA poultry science department. In 2015, UGA faculty members developed CHKMINTENT, an app that allows farmers to enter local climatic conditions and other factors to calculate cooling and ventilation plans for their chicken houses. Farmers in the U.S. and across the globe have downloaded the app more than 1,000 times.

Learn more: tinyurl.com/UGAFeedMix



The FeedMix App

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