

Full Length Research Paper

Productivity, management and marketing of pigeons in pet shop

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Exotic fancy pigeons of fifty types that are available in Bangladesh today was observed in Kushtia and Dinajpur district of Bangladesh from July 2011 to December 2012. Each breed feeding cost comes to only 1.50 taka per day and during hatching of young ones this becomes 3:00 taka per day in average. It has been observed through 18 months study that the buyers pay 1000 to 6000 taka for each pair of fancy pigeon. In fancy items, the Fantail is the most common items for buyers. Its expanded tail and tremules of the neck is more attractive to everybody. Though the highly expensive Pouter, King and Runt are available but their customers are few. In Bangladesh the buyers have attraction for fancy pigeons but its high price makes them less interested. For that reason they want to buy such type of pigeons which are less costly and its squab sells are less bothering during marketing. So the Fantail rearing is easier in that case. In pigeon shop most of the cage measurements are 24×18×16 inches for all types of breeds. No medicine expenditure was found during the period of study. Feeding pot measurements are 7×4×2 and which can be used for the pigeons feeding. Fresh tubewell water is available everywhere for the pigeons use and as a result no production is hampered. Reports have shown that the cage trays are cleaned twice a day and this keeps the pigeons free from all the diseases. Monthly expenditure including electricity and house rent becomes taka 50 for each pigeon for a month. Total cost for one pigeon is taka 200 per month and if it can be sold within seven days after the completion of one month it can bring a profit of taka 150. If the pigeons are sold in the same months of their purchase, the sellers get no profit. But if it is sold after six months, monthly expenditure for each pair of pigeon becomes taka 3000 but sales proceeds becomes, 5000 for each pair. So, each pair of pigeon can earn a profit of taka 2000 after six months. Because after the expiry of six months no fresh parental stock is needed. The study also found that normal per pigeon cost was an average of 300 taka but during hatching period it become taka 600 due to excessive use of light and feeding. Maximum body weight of male Runt fancy pigeon is 650 g and that of female is 625 g and its 45 days old squab becomes 430 g each.

Key words: Pigeon, pet shop, cost-benefit, productivity, management.

INTRODUCTION

Pigeon farming in Bangladesh is increasing day by day due to unemployment in Bangladesh. This is one of the beneficial sectors for income as well as hobby. Pigeons and doves have originated from the same ancestor. Both are normally same and belong to family columbidae. Pigeons are domesticated and among doves only *Streptopelia risoria* is domesticated and others are wild. It is very difficult to differentiate the pigeons from doves. A range of different species of pigeons originates from Asia

(Alderton, 2005). The genus *Columba*, as restricted according to the classification in four species and is again divided two subspecies (Baker, 1913). The Egyptians had been doing so for some time by 2500 BC- indeed they are still noted for their dove houses and table pigeons (McNeillie, 1993). Sometimes pigeons and doves gather together while feeding and its wild variety were found near about human habitation (Khan, 2008). The colour variation of dove is remarkable and on the other hand the



Plate 1. Indian Fantail.



Plate 4. Capuchin.



Plate 2. Lahore.



Plate 5. Homer.



Plate 3. Pouter.

variation of the pigeons is less but now for the selective breeding its variety of colour is increasing day by day. There are near about 300 breeds of pigeon in the world. Victoria is the major squab producing breed in Australia. Squabs are ready to fly and ready to leave their nest within 26-30 days of age. Then they weight about 500 g and become ready to send to market for table purpose. White Kings are the best squab producer. For maximum production enough scope for regular flying, dry dwelling condition and good ventilation are must. Floor nestling should be discouraged as squabs on the floor are prone to cannibalism. Breeding parent should be selected on live weight 450-700 g. some useful female breeding life extends up to 10 years, and male 5 years. To prevent inbreeding there should be mating of high producing

females with younger male which is more vigorous. Continuous selection of large bird pair produces always more males than females. Pigeon normally moult and stop breeding in autumn and winter. Pigeons eat more in the colder months and during caring and hatching. 25 breeding pairs will eat about 3 kg of feed daily. Many pigeon breeders separate their pigeon in October and cooler climates and re-mate in April.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Pigeon breeds

During the time of February 2011 to July 2012 in Kushtia and Dinajpur pigeon shop there were several breeds of pigeons. Viz- Lahore, Fantail, Pouter, Strasser, Frillback, Runt, Capuchine, Carrier, King etc (Plates 1 to 10). Both pigeon shops of Fancy and Broiler (as fancy) for selling whereas and sports (flying tumbler) pigeons' and Mondain are used as foster. At least one visit was done in a week and data were collected regularly. Breeds such as Nun, Brunner Pouter, Beauty Homer, Ice Pigeon, Kokah, Short face Tumbler, Komorner Tumbler, Lowtan, Tumbler, Russian Trumpeter, Satinette, Naked necked, Owl and Scandaroon were few during the research period in the pet shop.

Feed

In both the shops daily two times mixed feed is supplied.



Plate 6. Frillback.



Plate 9. King.



Plate 7. Runt.



Plate 10. Magpie.



Plate 8. Strasser.

This feed contains less corn in summer and more in winter to maintain required heat for them during breeding. Generally 10:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. is the feeding time and 30 to 40 g of feed is provided to a pair of pigeon. After serving this feed, a time period of 10 to 15 min is allowed, then the remaining feed is measured to find out the quantity of feed consumed by two pigeons. Seven days after hatching 30-33 grams of feed is required for each pigeon. In Kushtia pigeon shop it was observed that feed was served two times in a day but in Dinajpur the feeding time was thrice a day during pre-laying stage. The cost for per kg feed in Dinajpur is 34 taka whereas it

is 50 taka at Kushtia. The food items at Dinajpur are mixture of various ingredients in nature. Generally it is mixed with broiler feed to make the pigeons healthy but at Kushtia the pigeon feed is a mixture of wheat, corn, Japanese millet, sunflower seed and paddy (Table 1).

Cage and pot measurements

In Kushtia large cages for King and Strasser pigeon are of 30x24x20 inches (length, width and height) whereas in Dinajpur this is 24x18x16 inches.

Pot measurements are same in both Dinajpur and Kushtia (6x3x3 and 5x2.5x3 inches). Rearing style is intensive in both shops.

Cost study

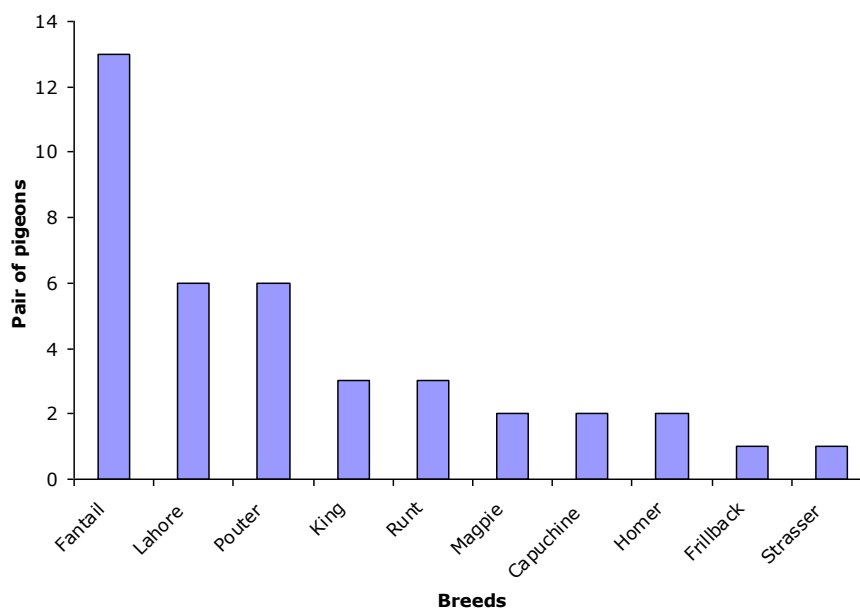
Monthly expenditure including house rent, electricity and others costs per month in Kushtia is 6000 taka but in Dinajpur this is 2700 taka only. After balancing the rest of the feed in pots with the quantity of original feed supplied in the pots it can easily be detected the quantity of the swallowed feed. In this way calculating daily feed consumption we can find out monthly or yearly requirements of feed (Tables 1 and 2) (Graphs 1 and 2).

Table 1. 1st nine months (February 2011 - October 2011).

Breeds	Origin	Body weight (g)	Morning feed intake (g)	Evening feed intake (g)	Feeding cost/pigeon/day (Tk)
Indian Fantail	India	293.89±6.57	10.16±0.62	10.16±0.62	1.31±0.08
Lahore	Pakistan	293.33±6.24	9.65±0.62	9.65±0.62	1.46±0.08
Pouter	India	499.11±9.11	10.40±0.66	10.40±0.66	1.47±0.11
Capuchin	India	288.89±7.74	10.27±0.66	10.27±0.66	1.20±0.08
Homer	England	298.00±8.29	10.20±0.60	10.20±0.60	1.29±0.08
Frillback	England	294.44±6.43	9.67±0.63	9.67±0.63	1.79±0.08

Table 2. 2nd nine months (November 2011 to July 2012).

Breeds	Origin	Body weight (g)	Morning feed intake (g)	Evening feed intake (g)	Feeding cost/pigeon/day (Tk)
Fantail	India	292.56±8.00	10.90±0.83	9.90±0.54	1.30±0.09
Lahore	Pakistan	291.44±7.57	10.80±0.74	10.00±0.45	1.29±0.08
Pouter	India	501.78±4.16	10.80±0.75	10.00±0.45	1.31±0.08
Runt	USA	625.56±23.74	10.90±0.70	10.10±0.54	1.43±0.11
Strasser	Austria	595.56±7.62	10.60±0.66	9.60±0.92	1.46±0.11
King	USA	597.22±6.71	10.70±0.64	10.90±1.37	1.48±0.12
Magpie	Denmark	288.89±7.74	10.27±0.66	10.27±0.66	1.20±0.08

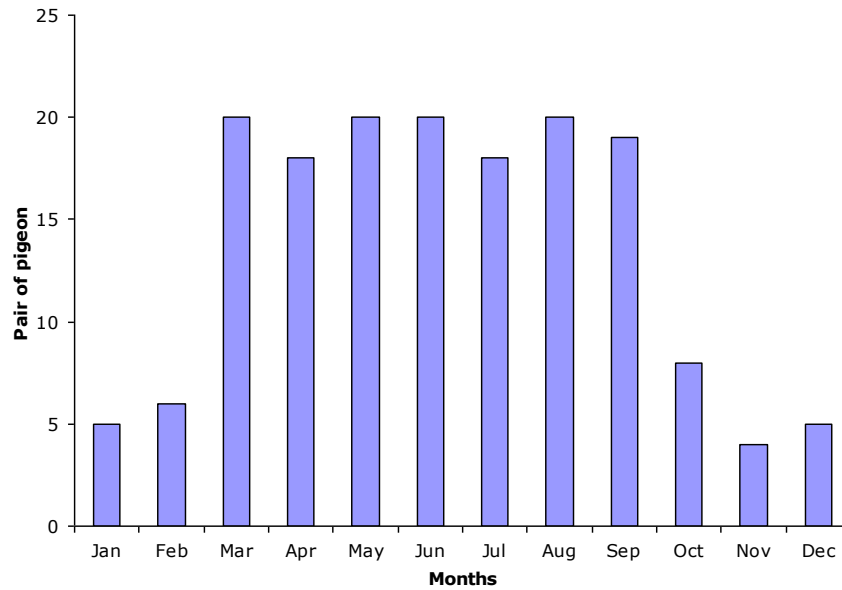
**Graph 1.** Showing sales of pair of breeds in a month.

Diseases

No diseases were found in Dinajpur but in Kushtia Newcastle and eye problem were present. No medicines were used except antiworm and some vitamins.

Disqualifications for the pigeons

For identifying the scoring of the pigeons in both shops maintained some disqualifications like off colour, awry



Graph 2. Showing monthly selling of pair of pigeons.

Table 3. Following table showing the points for identifying pure breeds.

Characteristics	Numbers
Carriage	16
Condition	10
Beak	3
Head	7
Eyes	3
Eye cere	4
Wattle	2
Neck	7
Wings	8
Back	9
Tail	7
Breast	10
Body	10
Shanks and Toes	4
Total number	100

Source: Levi 1957.

and split tail, pearl eye, deformed keel, feather on tarsus and feet, wing below tail, illegal temper etc (Tables 3 and 4).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Early sell proceeds are more than late marketing. Average 13 pairs sold in a month of all breeds especially Fantail and from December to February due to cold weather the selling record were dull. If any delay occurs

more than one month, it must be preserve at least six months for maturity. After three to six months it may bring a double profit than early selling. In two shops it was found in investigation that fancy pigeons were sold. Considering the total number of fancy pigeons nine types were found. The most costly exotic breed was Pouter and lowest was Lahore. Breeds were bred in captivity. During the time of fancy pigeons selling some wildlife traders were involved there and this problem is most in Southeast Asia. At present due to the unwise and non-

Table 4. Grading of the pigeons in the pet shop.

Name of breed	Qualifications	Grade A+	Grade A	Grade B+
Indian Fantail	Muffed, Long bodied, Rectrices 30-42	√	×	×
Lahore	If two colours the opposite color will be staying just a line, beak white, crown, shoulder, back, wings and rump will be same colour	×	×	√
Pouter	Jet like body, sudden move, swollen crop in both female and male	×	√	×
Capuchin	Slender body, medium hooded crest, it can see and need not to cut for proper breeding	√	×	×
Homer	Short feather, one band on the wing, rounded and fine coarse of wattle	×	×	√
Frillback	Frilled feather of the wing, long body	×	√	×
Runt	Slender and long body	×	×	√
Strasser	Stout body, ending of any colours line is fine	×	×	√
King	Ball like body, straight tail	×	√	×
Magpie	Slender body, long neck	×	√	×

scientific pigeon rearing some breeds are being extinct. Birds should be kept in cages at a location near the house in such a way that they can see one another easily throughout the year (Alderton, 2008). It is essential to maintain a ledger to keep records of sale proceeds. This will show whether the squabs selling or parental stocks selling is more profitable (Hazards, 1922). Sand, dust of lime and ashes is good for killing the germs inside the pigeons' houses floor (Rahman, 1999). There are many popular breeds now which have been created within the

last hundred years and some within the last fifty years. The American author has divided the fancy pigeons into four types such as: fancy, utility, high flying and racing (Levi, 1957). Tumbler and rollers (Kabir, 2012; EntriKin and Erway, 1972) were occasionally found in both shops. During the time of pigeon selling some illegal animal traders sell indigenous birds which are endangered or threatened in nature (IUCN, 2000b). In the pigeon shop most of the shop owner sells some wild animals which is illegal to our native laws and it is also unethical and

harmful according to our natural environment (Sarker and Abdullah, 2009).

Conclusion

In Bangladesh the pigeon rearing as hobby in residence is neglected due to lack of proper knowledge. Pigeon farming and a pet shop establishment could alleviate our poverty at this moment. We have a lot of manpower who has no exact work to this society. Whereas our domestic pigeon will extant in this nature and will be accepted by everybody. In Bangladesh the environment is suitable for pigeon rearing, less feeding can be implemented; no odour can be felt and diseases are very less among the pigeons. From earlier days pigeon rearing existed in Bangladesh as a hobby of the upper class people. Many of them used to rear it to use its squab for meat. Pigeon rearing for unemployed people may solve unemployment problem in Bangladesh to some extent. There are many professional pigeon farms in Dhaka, Chittagong, Rajshahi, Khulna, Natore, Pabna, Naogaon, Dinajpur, Kushtia, Bheramara and other places. The future of Pigeons' farm is very bright in Bangladesh no doubt in coming days. Pigeon may be an experimental (laboratory) bird as well as its genetics studies. We can easily produce colourful and excellent feathered pigeons through selective breeding. It can be implemented broiler pigeon as a source of protein. In our society most of the farm owners are illiterate so that they don't know how to deal with a researcher. That's why a lot of bad experiences had to be faced during the observation of the farms. Due to lack of proper knowledge they mix the breeds to others so that it loses its purity and class characteristics. Though maximum breeds are not real and it is carrying a lot of different genes within its cell. And some common mistakes of the names of pigeons are Pouter Ball instead of Pouter, Rain for Runt, Jacobin for Capuchin, Scandaroon for Down Face, Short piece for Short face and Satinette for Sartin etc. Besides, pigeons can be second poultry of Bangladesh. Moreover, our environment is much better than others for pigeon farming. So, it can be surely concluded that pigeon farming on the roof of the residence and in shop in urban and rural areas may be a source of earning and can contribute must to the economic development of Bangladesh. Some pigeon businessman lives on this job. Both of the businessman and owners do not know the importance of pigeon in our ecosystem. This is the moral responsibility of the departments concerned to implement these laws and control illegal trading of these birds. Very few references have been quoted in my results and discussion section due to very limited publication in this sector. Ignorance and the lack of consciousness of people have been found to be the most important factor. Besides the lack of the implementation of law and lack of governments attention are mentionable.

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