



TABLE CONTENT

1. POWER OUTAGES IN ZAMBIA DISRUPT POULTRY MARKET AS BULK BUYING DECLINES SHARPLY

2. DAY OLD CHICK PRICES -STABLE
3. BROILER CHICKEN PRICES -STABLE
4. FROZEN CHICKEN MAINTAINS
5. EGG PRICES -ADJUST SLIGHTLY
6. POINT OF LAY INCREASES
7. FEED PRICES MAINTAINS

Power Outages in Zambia Disrupt Poultry Market as Bulk Buying Declines Sharply

Persistent power outages in Zambia have severely disrupted the poultry industry, triggering a major shift in consumer habits and putting pressure on farmers, processors, and retailers. As load shedding intensifies across the country, the Poultry Association of Zambia has raised concerns that the impact could be long-term and damaging for the entire value chain.

At the center of the crisis is the breakdown of Zambia's cold-chain system. Poultry products rely on consistent refrigeration from production to the point of sale. However, due to frequent power cuts, freezers and fridges across the country can no longer maintain safe temperatures. As a result, many Zambian households have stopped buying chicken in bulk, fearing that stored meat will spoil. Instead, they now purchase smaller quantities that can be prepared immediately, leading to a significant drop in bulk demand.

This decline has created a domino effect throughout Zambia's poultry sector. Farmers who usually sell large consignments now find themselves keeping birds longer than planned. In some cases, chickens remain on farms for up to 12 additional weeks, far beyond their ideal market age. Keeping birds this long increases feeding costs, heightens the risk of disease, affects meat quality, and places pressure on already limited housing space.

Small- and medium-scale farmers in Zambia are particularly affected. Most lack access to alternative power sources such as generators, making it difficult to run vital equipment like incubators, brooding lamps, and ventilation systems. Without these, raising healthy birds becomes a challenge, and many farmers are recording heavy losses or halting production altogether. Even those with backup power face rising expenses, as generator fuel and maintenance costs continue to climb.

Processing plants and abattoirs in Zambia are also struggling. They require steady power to operate cold rooms, ensure hygiene standards, and safely store poultry before distribution. With the combined burden of increased operational costs and reduced market demand, profitability across the sector is shrinking.

The economic implications for Zambia are worrying. A once predictable industry is now marked by uncertainty, with producers unable to plan their production cycles reliably. Many farmers hesitate to invest in new batches of birds, fearing they may not recover costs due to unstable demand and unreliable electricity. If these challenges persist, Zambia may face a

reduction in poultry supply and possible price increases for consumers.

<https://poultrynews.africa/index.php/2025/12/01/power-outages-in-zambia-disrupt-poultry-market-as-bulk-buying-declines-sharply/>

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Festive-Season Fallout: Zimbabwe's Poultry Farmers in Bulawayo Hit Hard by Day-Old Chick Shortage

As the festive season approaches, poultry farmers in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, are grappling with a crippling shortage of day-old chicks (DOC), a challenge that threatens their seasonal production and overall livelihood. Typically, farmers begin stocking up on chicks six weeks before Christmas to meet rising holiday demand for chicken meat. This year, however, that preparation has been severely disrupted as DOC supplies have dwindled across the city.

Reports indicate that the shortage is not only widespread but has also opened the door for unfair trade practices. Some suppliers are now demanding that farmers purchase feed first before being allowed to buy chicks — a move many small-scale farmers view as exploitative. The Competition and Tariffs Commission (CTC) in Zimbabwe has since issued a warning, describing such conditions as anti-competitive and harmful to already struggling producers.

Industry experts attribute the root of the shortage to rising production costs faced by breeders. The Zimbabwe Poultry Association (ZPA) explains that rearing parent stock — the birds responsible for producing eggs that become day-old chicks — has become increasingly expensive. A single breeding bird can cost breeders up to US\$25 by the time it reaches egg-laying maturity. This figure includes the cost of acquiring the parent bird, feeding it, vaccinating it, and managing essential utilities such as electricity during its growth.

With these rising costs, breeders across Zimbabwe have become cautious about maintaining large volumes of parent stock. Instead of preparing specifically for festive-season demand,



many base their production on average yearly demand to avoid losses. This conservative approach means that when holiday demand surges, breeders are unable to significantly increase supply — resulting in widespread shortages in regions like Bulawayo.

For small-scale farmers in Zimbabwe, this shortage has been devastating. Many rely on festive-season poultry production as a major annual income stream. Without access to day-old chicks, some have been forced to abandon production plans altogether, while others have significantly scaled down their operations. The ripple effects are likely to be felt in Bulawayo's households and markets, where chicken is a popular and affordable festive food.

To ease the crisis, one of Zimbabwe's major suppliers, Hamara, has introduced an alternative option: offering three-week-old birds to farmers who may be struggling with brooding due to the country's hot and wet weather conditions. The supplier even promised one final batch of these "teen" birds to be delivered by mid-December. While this gesture provides partial relief, it does not fully solve the problem — older chicks are pricier to purchase, require more advanced care, and bring higher mortality risks for farmers lacking proper brooding setups.

This ongoing crisis highlights deeper structural issues within Zimbabwe's poultry sector. Escalating feed prices, unpredictable production costs, limited hatchery capacities, and inconsistent market planning continue to strain the supply chain. Unless regulators, breeders, and suppliers find coordinated solutions, small-scale poultry farming — a critical livelihood for many Zimbabweans — may face long-term setbacks, especially during peak seasons when farmers expect their highest returns.

<https://poultrynews.africa/index.php/2025/12/02/festive-season-fallout-zimbabwes-poultry-farmers-in-bulawayo-hit-hard-by-day-old-chick-shortage/>



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PRICES FOR DAY OLD BROILERS, LAYERS AND VILLAGE CHICKS- STABLE

The prices for day old chicks have not changed during the month of November 2025. However, there was increased demand for broilers day old chicks as we move closer to Christmas and new year. The day-old broiler chick was selling between ZMK18.00 cheapest and the highest price of K19.50 per day old chicks recorded during the month of November 2025.

The price for the day-old pullets was equally maintained at K24.5 per chick. Village chicks were selling for the average price of K18.00 each.

It is likely that there will be a slight reduction in terms of demand for day old chicks as the rainfall activity intensifies in most parts of the country and as we enter the post festive period.

For Broilers who plan well this is the best opportunity to invest in broiler production bearing in mind reduced supply of broilers on the open market during the first quarter of the year.



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PRICES FOR LIVE CHICKENS – MAINTAINS

Village chickens were selling for the average price of K165 to K180 each. It is important to note of the fact that there was no price movement on village chickens from the open Market during the month of November 2025

The price for x layers on the other hand has equally not recorded any increment from the previous spot price of K100 observed last month.

In terms of live broiler chickens at the open Market prices are stable ranging K120 per bird to the average price of K130.

Increased load shedding has impacted negatively on the demand for chicken meat. In some areas consumers are having electricity 2 to 3 hours a day on average.

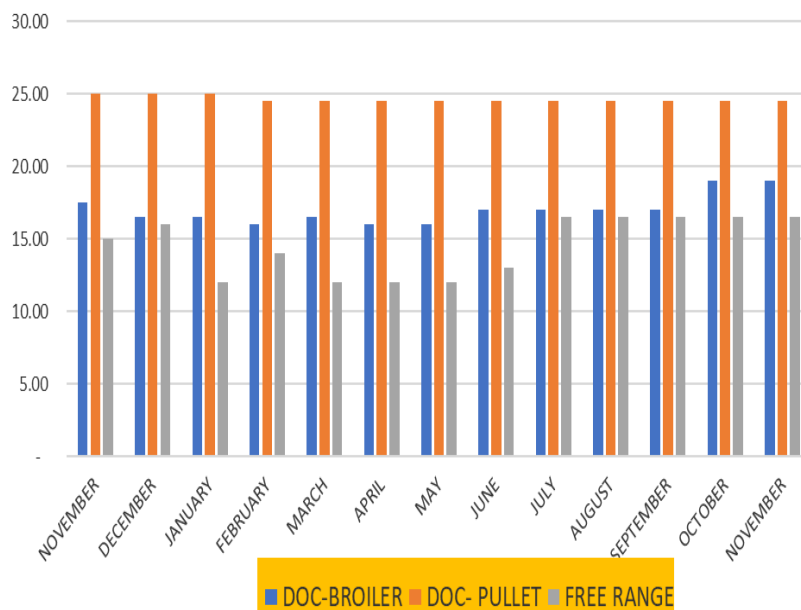
We hope the reduction in load shedding will trigger increased demand for chickens.

X Layers were selling at the average was K85 farmgate price while retail price was K150 each

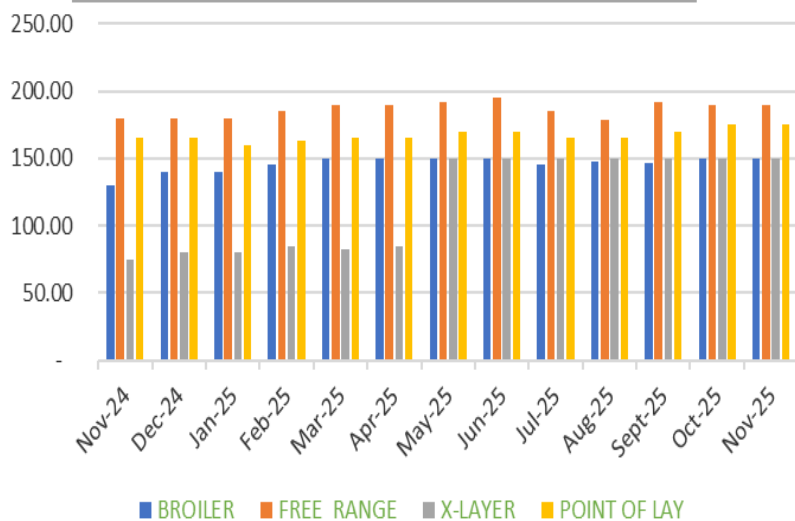
Point of lay chickens were selling between K170 to K185 per bird during the month of November 2025.

Most companies are taking bookings for January and February 2026.

AVERAGE PRICES FOR DAY OLD BROILERS PULLETS & FREE RANGE CHICKS NOVEMBER 2025



AVERAGE PRICES FOR LIVE BROILERS, FREE RANGE X LAYER POINT OF LAY November 2024 - November 2025



Point of lay chickens have increased from the average price of K165 in September to K170 to K175 per bird. Currently most companies are taking bookings for December and January 2026.

BROILER & LAYER FEEDS PRICES - STABLE

The prices for both Broiler feeds and Layer feeds have been maintained at the National Average price K650 for starter and K620 Average price for Grower feeds. Finisher feeds is selling at the average price of K697.

December 2025

ISSUE number 11



Layer feeds equally been stable for the last three months. The National Average for layer feeds is about K541 per 50 kg bag.

Generally, there wasn't any significant adjustment in prices for feed from most suppliers on the Market.

We hope the status quo will be maintained as go into the first quarter of the year 2026

PROCESSED CHICKENS -STABLE

Prices for processed chickens in the supper markets was K69 – K73 price which is the same has what was captured in the month of October 2025.

It is anticipated that the demand for chicken meat will increase in the month of December as enter the festive period.

Farmers are encouraged to produce more chickens in readiness for the expected demand increase.

NOTE The above prices are capture from the local supermarkets in Lusaka namely Shoprite, Merisa, choppies and pick and pay

TABLE EGG PRICES -SLIGHT INCREASE

The price for table eggs was on the slightly increase from

K63 registered in October 2025 farmgate price to K70 Farmgate price in November 2025

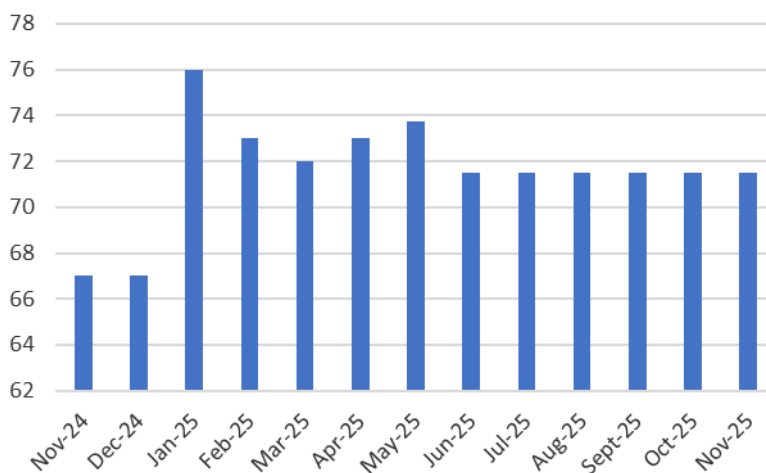
The retail price has also adjusted to about K72 to K73 per tray in Lusaka. For supermarkets price range for eggs was K63 lowest price to K94.00 highest price during the month of November 2025Of course, this depends on the size of the eggs and the supplier.

SUNFLOWER CAKE, SOYACAKE - STABLE

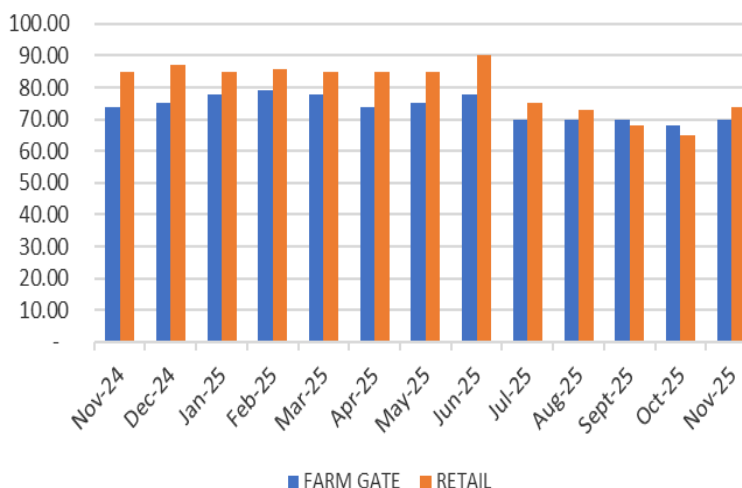
Prices for number 3 meal and Soyacake prices have been stable during the month of November 2025

For more information contact the different suppliers on the Market such as Mount Meru, Livestock services and others.

AVERAGE PRICES FOR FROZEN CHICKENS PER KG November 2024 -November 2025



AVG PRICES FOR EGGS NOVEMBER 2024 - NOVEMBER 2025





NOVEMBER 2025 Feed prices



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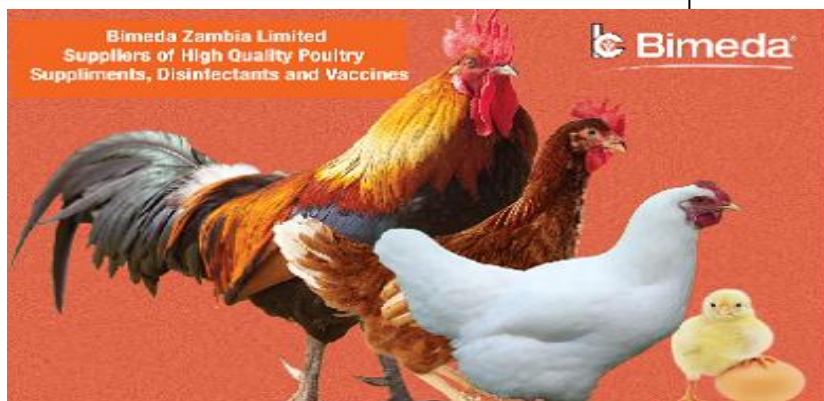
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ISSUE number 11

Note: All prices in this update are retail prices- for all your poultry information please visit the website: www.paooz.org
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