How to prevent and treat the 5 most common chicken diseases

Diseases are one of the barriers to the success of any poultry farmer hence need to be effectively prevented.

Fowl pox can come in two forms either wet or dry. In the dry form, unfeathered parts of your bird will have wart like lesions that heal in around 2 weeks. The wet form manifests as lesions around the beak and discharge from birds‘ eyes. The disease has no treatment but the symptoms will go away after some time and prevention of the disease is by vaccination. Also control mosquitoes in your flock because they transmit the disease from one bird to another.

Identification and management

Infectious bronchitis manifests as a cold. Infected birds will have a drop in egg production, low appetite, discharge from the eyes and difficulty in breathing. The disease has no treatment but antibiotics are given to prevent secondary infections while prevention is by vaccination.

Mareks affects chicken of between 12 and 25 weeks and has signs like development of tumours, irregular eye pupil and partial paralysis. The disease has no treatment but even if a bird recovers, it remains a carrier hence need to be culled.

Newcastle is manifested by signs like difficulty in breathing, nasal discharge, murky eyes, reduction in egg production, twisting of the neck and paralysis. The disease has no treatment but antibiotics help prevent secondary infections. Vaccination and good sanitation are preventative measures.

Coccidiosis causes bloody or watery diarrhoea in birds, loss

in weight and ruffled feathers in chicken. Treatment is by using antibiotics while prevention is by keeping feeding areas, brooders and poultry houses clean and dry.