# english black

# Package 90, Script 15

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**A Kenyan farmer uses water hyacinth to feed chickens**

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### Notes to broadcaster

For many years, farmers in Kenya have used grains to feed their chickens. Lately, drought has hit many parts of the country, leading to very low grain harvests. This has resulted in a lack of grain to feed chickens.

An innovative farmer in Kenya has found an answer to the shortage of grain by using water hyacinth for chicken feed.

This script is based on an actual interview. To produce this script on your station, you might choose to use voice actors to represent the speakers. Or you could use this script to research and write a script on a similar topic in your area. If so, please make sure to tell your audience at the beginning of the program that the voices are those of actors and not the original people.

Cue in signature tune to begin the broadcast. The signature tune fades after 15 seconds under the voice of the program host.

**Program host:** Good morning, dear friends and listeners of Radio Maendeleo. Welcome to today's program, whose theme is "using water hyacinth to feed chickens." Let us listen to how a farmer from Asembo Bay village in Kenya uses water hyacinth to feed chickens. Our guest is poultry farmer Mr. Peter Kochiel. I am your host and presenter Fredrick Mariwa. Stay tuned!

*Ten second musical tune that fades and disappears under the sound of chickens and the reporter*

**Reporter:** I am in Asembo Bay village in Rarieda District, in the compound of Mr. Peter Kochiel, a poultry farmer. Welcome to the program, Mr. Kochiel.

**Mr. Kochiel:** (*Clears his throat*) Thank you. My name is Peter Kochiel. I am a poultry farmer. I raise local breeds. Our country has had food shortages for quite a while, particularly in grains like maize and millet. Most poultry farmers like me are faced with difficult choices and do not know what to do.

**Reporter:** I can see your compound is occupied by chickens of different colours, a very clear sign that you are a poultry farmer. What can you tell us about the poultry farming that you practice?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Let me begin by saying that poultry farming is the raising of chickens for either eggs or meat. In most cases, people use hybrid chickens for eggs, raising chickens known as layers, or for meat, from chickens known as broilers. My case is different because I raise one type of chicken for both eggs and meat.

**Reporter:** Can you describe to our listeners how you do it?

**Mr. Kochiel:** I raise local breeds of chicken which are used both for meat and for eggs. Raising local breeds is not as complicated as raising hybrid animals. The local breeds are fertilized by cocks. They lay eggs, which hatch without much attention. The hens which lay eggs for sale are kept away from the cocks that might fertilize them. Fertilized eggs go bad quite quickly and can’t be sold or stored for long.

*Ten second musical tune that fades and disappears under the voice of the reporter*

**Reporter:** Can you briefly describe to our listeners how you feed your poultry?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Well, I used to feed them on grains such as maize and millet. But currently I am using feed produced from water hyacinth.

**Reporter:** Why did you switch from grains to hyacinth and how did you do it?

**Mr. Kochiel:** It is a long story. But I can say that my chickens contributed to this change. For quite a long time I used grain. But all of a sudden I ran out of grain. I couldn’t afford to buy grain to feed the chickens. So I simply left them to look for whatever food they could find within the compound.

I later learned that the chickens lost weight. They also began to jump over the fence and look for feed at the lakeshore.

**Reporter:** Were the chickens in any danger while feeding at the lakeshore?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Yes. A few days later, I realized that a number of my chickens were missing. Then one day, a cock ran home with a deep cut on its throat. I ran to the shore where they were feeding on hyacinth, only to find a mongoose ready to pounce on another cock.

**Reporter:** What did you do?

**Mr. Kochiel:** I was worried and didn’t know what to do. I could not stop them from searching for feed, yet I could not provide for them. The next day I spent all day at the shore the, trying to keep my chickens safe. But most importantly, I wanted to see what they ate there, so that I could bring it home for them to feed on.

I realized they were pecking and feeding on the dry hyacinth. Occasionally, they could come across some insects and feed on them as well. So I carried a sack full of dry hyacinth plants home. Most of the chickens enjoyed feeding on the plants that I brought home, though a few still went to the shore after briefly feeding on it.

*Ten second musical tune that fades and disappears under the voice of the reporter*

**Reporter:** But what they are feeding on here does not look like the hyacinth plant I know.

**Mr. Kochiel:** Yes, this is chopped, dried and ground water hyacinth.

**Reporter:** At first, you told us that they were feeding from the dry hyacinth. But now this is chopped and ground. Can you please explain this to us?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Come over and see.

*Sound of footsteps through dry grass*

**Mr. Kochiel:** Except for some of the cocks, most of the chickens spend their day feeding on the dry collected hyacinth. They peck at the hyacinth and turn it with their feet as they feed. They did this for two days when I brought the dry hyacinth home. But the chickens were finding it difficult to break the hyacinth.

Then I thought that if I chopped and ground the hyacinth into pieces, it would be easier for the chickens to feed. The small chicks could also easily feed. I continued doing this, and I also brought termites and mixed them with the feed. The chickens liked this too. I got the idea of adding termites because, when I was watching them at the shore, I could see them eating the termites they occasionally came across. So my chickens became fat and healthy and stopped going to the shore in search of food.

**Reporter:** It seems that the water hyacinth – which is believed to be a bad weed, or be a *bad omen* to the people of the area – is now becoming a useful plant for making chicken feed. Is this so, Mr. Kochiel?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Yes. It has really helped me sustain my chickens. In fact, they are healthier than they used to be when I was feeding them on grain. And now I am using all the grain that I used to feed them for my own food.

*Ten second musical tune that fades and disappears under the voice of the reporter*

**Reporter:** Could you please describe to our listeners how to turn the water hyacinth into chicken feed?

**Mr. Kochiel:** First you pick the dry hyacinth plants from the lakeshore. Then you chop them into pieces. After chopping, you place the pieces in the grinding stones and grind them. Add a little water to make it slightly moist. Then you serve it to the chickens. I have to say that the process is not easy to undertake. It needs some time, energy and determination. My family members help me a great deal with this.

**Reporter:** And this process has been of benefit to you and your chickens?

**Mr. Kochiel:** Yes, this is how it has worked for me. I believe also that this will greatly help farmers in the rapidly changing climate. I invite other farmers to try this and join me so that we can improve on food security and in turning this water weed into a useful plant.

**Reporter:** Mr. Kochiel, thank you for inviting us to your home and speaking to us about using water hyacinth to produce chicken feed.

**Program host:** Dear listeners and my dear farmers, we hope that you have learned one low-cost way to make chicken feed. In today's broadcast, we have talked about the steps involved in producing chicken feed from water hyacinth. We have also talked about raising local breeds of poultry. Thank you, Mr. Kochiel, for speaking with us today. Thank you, dear listeners, for your attention, and until next time I am your host and presenter, Fredrick Mariwa.

Raise the volume of the signature tune, then fade out to end the program

## Acknowledgements

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