

Agriculture and Animal Resources Minister Dr. Telesphore Ndabamenye says, the government plans to expand domestic production of animal feeds to reduce costs and cut reliance on imports as it seeks to accelerate growth in the livestock sector.

Speaking to the Senate on Jan. 19, 2026, Ndabamenye said increasing livestock numbers must go hand in hand with the availability of affordable and high-quality feed. He said imported feed ingredients remain costly due to transport and other expenses, making them less accessible to farmers.

The government is prioritizing the development of livestock farming, including cattle, small livestock and aquaculture, to increase production. Farmers are being supported with access to improved breeds, particularly in cattle farming, where efforts focus on expanding high-yield dairy and meat-producing animals.

To speed up the spread of improved genetics, the government plans to introduce advanced livestock technologies such as embryo transfer, allowing cattle to reproduce using embryos from superior breeds.

Fish production is projected to rise to 77,000 metric tons by 2029, up from 52,000 tons in 2025. Egg production is expected to increase from 17,000 tons in 2024 to 21,000 tons by 2029.

Ndabamenye said Rwanda already has animal feed processing factories, but many are operating below capacity. Most plants are using between 32% and 60% of their installed capacity, limiting supply and keeping prices high.

He said raising factory utilization to between 80% and 90% would significantly improve feed availability. The government is also encouraging the development of storage facilities across the country to collect raw materials used in feed production.

Animal feed manufacturing relies largely on byproducts from maize, rice, sugarcane and soybean processing. Rwanda wants to ensure these byproducts are properly stored and sold domestically, rather than exported and later reimported at higher cost.

Ministry of Agriculture figures show maize byproducts totaled 38,044 tons in 2024 and are projected to reach 70,560 tons by 2029. Rice byproducts are expected to rise to about 1.3 million tons, while sugar industry byproducts are projected to

increase to 7,098 tons.

Several senators raised concerns about the quality of animal feed and called for stronger regulation and oversight.