

LESSON 4 – CHICKEN MEAT INDUSTRY

Time Needed

- 30-45 minutes depending on skill level

Skill/Grade Level

- Grades 3-5

Core Areas

- Animal Sciences
- Family and Consumer Sciences

Life Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Decision making

Educational Standards

- Computer Science: E.IC.01: Discuss how computing has impacted society (positively and negatively)
 - Grade 3. Describe how computing technology impacts the way people live, work, and interact
 - Grade 4. Compare and contrasts how computing has changed society from the past to the present
 - Grade 5. Describe the positive and negative impacts of computing on society.

Objectives

Through the Kentucky Farm to School Curriculum related to chicken, participants will:

- **Learn** about the American chicken meat industry
- **Learn** to evaluate agricultural information people post online as to its validity

Introduction to Content

After having discussed the importance of protein in our diet and how that can be filled with chicken meat, this lesson looks at how chicken is produced in the United States. It also looks at some of the misinformation available online.

Background Information

A 2019 survey indicated that American consumers have seven factors they consider when purchasing chicken. They are ranked in order of most important to least important.

1. **Freshness** – 34% of consumers responding to the survey indicate that freshness was the most important factor they consider when making purchases. Another 27% ranked it second in importance.
2. **Price** – Economics can have a major impact on a consumer’s purchasing decisions. About 27% of those responding to the survey indicated that price was the most important consideration, while another 20% said it was the second most important thing when making a purchase.
3. **How chickens are raised** – 13% of the respondents said animal health and welfare was the most important issue to consider when buying chicken products. However, 39% of those surveyed considered it the least important of the 7 factors included in the survey.
4. **Taste** – 13% of the responding consumers said they consider taste was the most important factor when purchasing chicken. Another 20% indicated that it was the second most important aspect they look for.
5. **Brand** – Several of the respondents indicated that they look for specific brands of chickens when making purchases. For 6% of those surveyed, it was the most important consideration.
6. **Quantity** – 4% of the responding consumers said the amount of chicken in a package was the most important factor they consider when purchasing chickens. Another 14% said it was the second-most important factor.
7. **Packaging** – Only 3% of the consumers responding to the survey indicated that the packaging was the most important factor to consider when purchasing. Many of the consumers, however, ranked it the least important.

Learn more at www.kentucky4h.org or contact your county extension office.



CHICKEN PRODUCTION

ACTIVITY 1 - Discussion

Concern about 'How chickens are raised' scored a third-place ranking in a survey of American consumers, but how much do consumers know about how meat chickens are raised.

The internet has changed the way people get information. This includes information regarding the food they eat. Social media has been defined as 'Consumer-generated media that covers a wide variety of new sources of online information, created and used by consumers intent on sharing information with others regarding any topic of interest.' Anyone can post anything on 'social media.' It is important to be able to tell the difference between fact and fiction.

The same goes for any information on the internet. Anyone can post pretty much anything they want, whether it is true or not. To investigate this, the students will do internet searches to see what type of information is posted online about chicken production in the United States.

Materials Needed

- Access to computer(s) with internet connection
- Activity: Research assignment: Chicken meat production – Fact vs Fiction
- Writing utensils

Instructions for Activity

In this activity, youth will delve deeper into how chicken makes a great menu item.

Prior to the activity:

1. Make copies of the handout on 'Why have chicken on your plate.'

Activity:

1. Using the assignment handout, have the students work alone or in groups to do internet searches on the information available on how meat chickens are raised in the United States. Have groups use different key phrases and/or different information sources.
 - Examples of search phrases: Factory farms; Meat chickens; Producing chicken meat in the US
 - Examples of information sources: Goggle, YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, etc.
2. Have the students share the type of information they found online about chicken production in the United States. Indicate that we will follow up in the next lesson to separate fact from fiction.

Some websites as additional resources:

- Farm 360 videos – chicken farm videos: <https://www.farmfood360.ca/en/chicken/>
- Company websites:
 - o Tyson: <https://www.tysonfoods.com/>
 - o Perdue: <https://corporate.perdufarm.com/>
 - o Wayne Sanderson Farms: <https://waynesandersonfarms.com/>
 - o Kentucky Farms Feed Me – Visit a poultry farm (KY Ag and Environment in the classroom) - <https://www.teachkyag.org/lessons/kentucky-farms-feed-me-visit-a-poultry-farm>

Credits:

This lesson plan was written by Dr. Jacquie Jacob, Department of Animal and Food Sciences, University of Kentucky. March 2024. Development of this curriculum was funded by the U.S. Poultry and Egg Foundation and the Kentucky Poultry Federation.