

LESSON 5 – CHICKEN PRODUCTION PRACTICES: FACT FROM FICTION

Time Needed

- 45-50 minutes depending on skill level

Skill/Grade Level

- Grades 3-5

Core Area

- Animal Sciences

Life Skills

- Critical Thinking
- Decision making

Educational Standards

Science:

- LS1-1: Life cycles
- LS3-1: Traits, inherited traits
- 4-PS4-1: Reproduction

Health education:

- HE-3.2.1: Analyze the influence of family, peers, culture, media, technology, and other factors on health behaviors
- HE-3.5.3; HE:4.5.3; and HE:5.5.3: Identify how community, school, media, and technology influence a decision related to personal health.

Objectives

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

- **Learn** more about the American commercial poultry industry, in particular the production of chicken meat
- **Learn** how important advances in genetic selection and management played roles in the development and efficiency of the American commercial chicken meat industry.

Introduction to Content

This lesson is a follow up from the previous lesson where the youth looked up the types of information that is on the internet about how chicken meat is produced in the United States. The information provided in the lesson will separate fact from fiction.

Activity 1: Lifecycle of a chicken

There are different options for teaching the participants about the lifecycle of a chicken, depending on the level of the youth involved.

1. Handout “Lifecycle of a chicken’, together with two activity sheets:
 - a. Identify the stages in the lifecycle of a chicken
 - b. Crossword puzzles on the lifecycle of a chicken (two to choose from)
2. More detail on the lifecycle of a chicken can be taught using the coloring book ‘Lifecycle of a chicken.’

Activity 2: Genetic selection of meat chickens

One of the common myths debunked in the last lesson was with regards to the use of hormones in poultry production. No poultry (meat or eggs) are produced with the use of hormones or steroids. Aside from the fact that they are illegal, they are ineffective. Genetic selection is a major reason that commercial meat chickens grow so fast. And it is done with normal genetic selection – i.e., not GMO. There are no FrankenChickens.

Activity instructions: Go over the handout on genetic selection as an important tool for chicken meat production and then have the youth complete the crossword puzzle related to genetic selection in chicken production.

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



Protein

ACTIVITY 3: Commercial chicken meat production

Activity instructions: Go over the handout on commercial chicken meat production and then have the youth complete the related activity sheets, depending on the level of the class.

- Crossword puzzle related to commercial chicken meat production
- Cryptogram related to commercial chicken meat production
- Mazes to get the chick from the hatchery to the customers' homes

Leave them the coloring book related to commercial meat production to remind them of what they learned.

Reflection

Debriefing the experience is what moves an experience from an activity to a learning experience. The primary purpose of processing the experience is to allow participants the opportunity to integrate their learning and provide a sense of closure or completeness to their experience.

Share: Have the youth discuss how accurate the information they found on the internet in the last lesson really was.

Process: Have the youth discuss whether the information they received in this lesson changed their impressions on how chickens are raised in the United States.

Extended Learning

Ways to extend learning beyond this lesson.

- Discuss with the youth the importance of evaluating information that they find on the internet and not take everything on face-value.

Reporting Your Success:

Initial Outcomes: As a result of this lesson, youth were able to:

- Identify the truth related to commercial chicken meat production in the United States
- Critically evaluate information they find on the internet

Intermediate Outcomes: Youth:

- Will be more careful about believing what they read on the internet

Long Term Outcomes: Youth:

- Base their important decisions only after validating information on the internet

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 US Poultry and Egg Foundation and the Kentucky Poultry Federation.