

The Meat of the Matter

Name: _____

Life Skill:

Preventing food-borne illness

Poultry Project Skill:

Making decisions

Success Indicator:

Identifies key food safety points along the poultry processing chain from farm to table.

A "In the old days", most people raised their own poultry. When they needed a chicken for dinner, they slaughtered one of their own birds, processed it themselves and ate it within a few hours of slaughter. Nowadays, most people get their poultry at the grocery store. More people and more time is involved. Birds are slaughtered and then transported hundreds of miles to individual

retail stores. They can remain in the meat cooler for a few days before purchase by the consumer, then be stored for a few more days in the consumer's home refrigerator before finally being cooked and eaten. In this activity, you will learn about the steps involved in getting poultry to consumers' tables and how food safety is a concern at each step.

Take off!

Identify the points at which poultry products could become contaminated during processing and handling. Track your poultry from farm to table. Identify food safety actions at each step of the processing that are needed to keep your poultry safe to eat.

Note: If you don't raise your own poultry, begin at the grocery store. Consider contamination by biological agents (bacteria), chemicals (cleaning agents, etc) physical damage (equipment).



Step	Threats to Food Safety	Methods to Ensure Food Safety
Processing		
Packaging		
Storing		
Thawing		
Cooking		
Storing left-overs		

Crow about it

- What threats to food safety did you identify?

Incubate ideas

- Why is it important to follow safe food handling practices for poultry products?
- What are the important things you learned about keeping poultry and poultry products safe to eat?

Spread your wings

- Where else might you apply these rules? Are there other foods? Other situations?

Un-coop your knowledge

- How will you change how you handle foods?



Food Handling Tips

As with any perishable meat, pathogenic bacteria can be found on raw or undercooked poultry. Bacteria multiply rapidly at temperatures between 40°F and 140°F, and can double as often as every 10 minutes at these temperatures. Freezing doesn't kill bacteria but they are destroyed by thorough cooking. Keeping hot things hot and cold things cold will help prevent bacterial growth in food. This means you should keep hot poultry dishes at or above 140°F and cold poultry dishes at or below 40°F. Leftovers should never be left unrefrigerated for more than two hours — get them at or below 40°F as soon as possible.

Sanitary food handling and proper cooking and refrigeration will help prevent food borne illness! Here are some rules that are easy to remember and follow when you are handling and cooking any type of raw meat:

- **Keep Separate.** Don't cross contaminate. Keep bacteria on raw poultry from spreading to cooked foods or foods that will be eaten raw. Any surfaces that have come into contact with juices of raw meat can be a source of bacteria.
- **Wash Hands.** After touching raw poultry products, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. This will prevent the transfer of bacteria to other surfaces or foods.
- **Keep Cool.** Store chicken in the refrigerator at 40°F, and use within 1-2 days. For longer storage, freeze at 0°F. Thaw frozen poultry in the refrigerator, microwave oven or in cold water, not at room temperature.
- **Cook Thoroughly.** Thorough cooking will destroy bacteria present on poultry. Cook whole birds to 180°F, breasts to 170°F, ground poultry meat to 165°F and stuffing (inside or outside of the bird) to 165°F.
- **Sanitize Surfaces.** Mix 1 tablespoon of chlorine bleach with 1 gallon of cool water. Sanitize cutting surfaces and equipment by washing with bleach solution after washing with soap and water. Let air dry.

Eggstra Challenges

1. Invite a person from your local health department to talk about foodborne illness.
2. Prepare a meal using unusual poultry (e.g. game hens, squab).
3. Visit a producer who has a HACCP plan in place.