

Class Starters & Enders

Making the Most of Instructional Time Five Minute Lessons

Class Starters and Enders help utilize the last minutes of class when a lesson ends but there is not enough time to start another, or for an interest approach at the beginning of class. Mini-lessons correlate to GPS in the programs areas below.

Hormones in Chickens?

Program Areas: Culinary Arts, Family and Consumer Sciences, Healthcare, and Agriculture

Instructions: Read the material and make notes of important points, answer questions and be ready to discuss this topic.

Whether it's on a bun or in a salad, chicken is a popular meat because of its relatively low cost and ability to be used in a variety of dishes. Because of various health concerns, price, and clever marketing campaigns, chicken **consumption** increased from 25 pounds **per capita** in 1970 to 100 pounds in 2010.

Despite its popularity on the kitchen table, some consumers still express concern when it comes to eating chicken. Clever marketing campaigns used by some companies proclaim their poultry is "hormone free," indicating to consumers that products without that label do contain added **hormones**.

That perception, however, is incorrect – hormone use in **poultry** production is illegal in the United States.

Like all living things, chickens contain natural hormones, but no hormones are fed or administered to them on the farm. Their phenomenal growth is due to proper diet and **genetic improvement**. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) regulate the production of poultry and set quality standards for the poultry products in the United States.

Hormones are **illegal** in poultry production for several reasons. First, **growth hormones** are actually proteins, and in order for them to be effective, they would need to be injected into the animals. That means producers would be giving more than 5 billion **injections** daily, which is not a feasible thing to do. Second, genetic selection created chickens that grow to their physical limit, and enhancing that with growth hormones could cause the mortality rate to rise. Finally, hormones are not even needed in the poultry industry because of genetic selection, nutritional requirements of chickens, and the need for a healthy environment.

The poultry industry continues to work to change the idea that hormones are used in poultry production, and instead focus on the research the industry is doing to help chickens grow to be a healthier and more profitable food animal.

Review

1. What two organizations in the United States set the standards for poultry production and consumption?
2. Name three reasons why it is illegal to feed hormones to chickens in the United States.
3. What was the annual per capita consumption of poultry in 1970? In 2010?
4. Is poultry consumption and production increasing or decreasing?
5. What can chickens' phenomenal growth be attributed to?



As the demand for poultry increases, producers must provide a larger number of chickens.

Language Connection

Define the following terms.

Consumption
Genetic Improvement
Growth Hormones
Hormones
Illegal
Injections
Per Capita
Poultry