



U.S. POULTRY & EGG ASSOCIATION

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Letters

Men's Journal

1290 Avenue of the Americas
New York NY 10104

SUBJECT: Letter to the Editor

We are writing to share our viewpoint on the *More Foul Fowl* section on page 47 of the July 2012 edition of *Men's Journal*. The section reports on why organic chicken is better than conventional chicken and provides three points.

Regarding the first point, commercial chicken feed in the United States does not contain any type of drugs that reduce anxiety in chickens nor are chickens fed any type of these drugs. As there is no reference to the studies mentioned in the *More Foul Fowl* section, we have to assume the person reporting obtained their information from a study generated by Johns Hopkins University on feather meal. The study claims to have found certain chemical and antimicrobial residues in chicken "feather meal," a source of protein for animals produced by cooking chicken feathers. However, our industry questions the origin, composition, and intended use of the 4 lb. and 22 lb. bags of "feather meal" used in the study. The U.S. poultry industry does not use 4 lb. and 22 lb. bags of "feather meal" in its commercial feed formulations, and industry experts speculate that the material in these bags were intended to be used as organic fertilizer and not as a source of feed.

Furthermore, the study failed to address other potential delivery mechanisms for these types of substances, such as potable water. A cursory review of research projects addressing pharmaceuticals and personal care products in the environment will show these products are a known group of emerging contaminants in waters around the world, and conventional water treatment systems are often unable to remove these substances. Feel free to test your tap water if you are truly concerned about this issue.

Consumers should know that all chicken produced in the United States is inspected by the USDA. Inspectors test chicken meat samples for chemical and antimicrobial residues and all poultry must be in compliance with USDA standards before they are allowed to enter the marketplace.

Regarding the second and third points --- no matter which production method used, chicken is low in saturated fat and high in protein. In fact, chicken without the skin has only 3 grams of fat per 3 ounce cooked portion. Even with the skin, chicken provides a modest 8 grams of fat per 3 ounce portion.

We know consumers have many choices when it comes to their chicken meat purchases. However, we do not believe it serves consumers to stigmatize certain production systems to boost others.

The amazing variety of chicken products today allows consumers to choose products that take into account many factors, including taste preference, personal values and affordability. Your readers should know, however, that USDA says the “organic” label *does not* indicate that the product has safety, quality or nutritional attributes that are any higher than traditionally raised products.

All chicken production systems, including organic, natural, and conventional methods, address issues as necessary to achieve its primary objective – the commitment to provide consumers with safe, wholesome, and affordable food. The chicken industry works diligently to ensure that no matter which production system they choose to support with their food dollars, consumers can have confidence in the safety and nutrition of all of their chicken purchases.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Glisson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Dr. John Glisson, DVM, MAM, Ph.D.
Director of Research Program
U.S. Poultry & Egg Association

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashley B. Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being more prominent.

Ashley Peterson, Ph.D.
Vice President of Science and Technology
National Chicken Council