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There's No Such Things as Safe Chicken

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There's No Such Thing As Safe Chicken

Eight out of ten USDA-approved chickens are contaminated with salmonella and campylobacter bacteria . . . Each year, these bacteria sicken at least 4 million Americans and kill 2,000. Raw poultry is now the most common source of these bacteria . . . Poultry producers say cleanliness is the consumer's problem . . . But should we have to treat chicken like hazardous waste?

Senator Howard Metzenbaum, USA Today (6/28/91)

The final product is no different than if you took a bird . . . stuck it in the toilet and then ate it . . . (p. 236*)

*Gerald Kuester
Former USDA Microbiologist*

The first thing they go through is the scald tank. There it's nothing but boiling fecal soup . . . It's a mass accumulation of bacteria on top of bacteria.

Today, basically, the consumers eat it. (pp. 341-342*)

USDA Poultry Inspectors

Workers get sick to their stomachs in the drain. The drain is a lot less sanitary than anyone's toilet. The Perdue inspectors told us to take (chickens that fell) out of the drain and send them back down the line . . . (p. 70*)

Former Perdue Worker

The waste is not always even from the chickens . . . (workers) sometimes have to relieve themselves on the floor. Chickens regularly fall off the line and into all the muck . . . supervisors have workers put them back on the line . . . (p. 70*)

Former Perdue Worker

. . . cancerous birds come through with tumors regularly, sometimes all day long . . . right after I'd put them in the condemned barrel foremen have the floor workers hang

the birds back on the (processing) line . . . (p. 61*)

Former Perdue Quality Control Inspector

I've heard that Frank Perdue ads talk about how tough his quality control inspectors are. He wouldn't dare run those ads in North Carolina . . . (p. 71*)

Former Perdue Worker

Can you imagine Frank Perdue's face when you go to him and say, "I want to put a warning on your chicken that says 'This chicken may be contaminated?'" (p. 346*)

*Jim Vance, Co-anchor
News 4 WRC-TV (NBC) (4/26/91)*

You are risking more than your health every time you eat chicken. You are supporting an industry which cripples workers, destroys the environment and creates an unending horror for birds. Twenty-five thousand birds at a time, are crammed into a dark warehouse, with less than one square foot of living space per bird, choking from accumulated ammonia fumes.

Perdue workers, mostly poor minority women, have to cut up to 90 chickens per minute, for minimal pay. When this unnatural speedup cripples the workers' arms and hands, they are fired and left to fend for

themselves. The government has fined Perdue for deliberately concealing worker injuries and for polluting the Virginia waterways. Perdue is a pioneer of intensive chicken confinement, which means misery for the birds and an epidemic of dirt and disease for consumers.

One More Thing To Worry About . . .

Rather than clean up the industry, current proposals call for covering up the dirt and disease by irradiating the birds. But using nuclear waste to irradiate chickens effectively turns consumers into individual toxic waste dumps. While this may help to dispose of nuclear waste, it introduces additional unknown health risks and encourages the poultry industry to further lower already abominable standards.

You can run this ad. This ad was produced by the Coalition for Non-Violent Food, a project of Animal Rights International. Henry Spira, coordinator, and is not copyrighted. For additional information about Frank Perdue and the poultry industry send a SASE to: ARI, Box 214, Planetarium Stn., New York, NY 10024. Your tax deductible contribution to ARI will make it possible to rerun this and related ads.

*Testimony from the June 28, 1991 Hearing of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources, U.S. Senate on *Poultry Safety: Consumers at Risk*.