

The risk of cancer being promoted by animal protein,(which would include chicken) was spelled out in The China Study by T. Colin Campbell: “Furthermore, a pattern was beginning to emerge: *nutrients from animal-based foods increased tumor development while nutrients from plant-based foods decreased tumor development*”.<sup>1</sup>

But risks go beyond cancer promotion. The USDA in a training film shows dead chickens floating in a bath of ‘fecal soup’ awaiting processing, filling with fecal water and being coated by bird feces. See film at FecalSoup.org.

Some slaughter lines process as many as 140 birds per minute, allowing inspectors minimal time to examine each carcass for visible feces.<sup>2</sup> In PCRM’s nationwide study of 15 grocery store chains, they found that 48 percent of chicken products tested positive for the presence of fecal bacteria, which cannot be destroyed by cooking.<sup>3</sup>

Rather than strengthen inspections, the USDA has proposed new guidelines that would decrease the number of federal inspectors on inspection lines from four to one, increase the number of chickens inspected from 140 to 175 per minute, and advocate for the use of antimicrobials to treat contaminated chicken rather than require processing that does not cause contamination in the first instance.<sup>4</sup>

PCRM also issued a second report in 2013 on other contaminants commonly found in chicken including antibiotic-resistant “superbugs” and arsenic.<sup>5</sup> In addition to contaminants related to processing, chicken products naturally contain carcinogens triggered through cooking and nearly as much cholesterol as red meat.<sup>6</sup>

A 2012 study from the University of Maryland determined that alarming levels of arsenic were found in chicken feed. The University of Maryland Center for Agro-Ecology found that the usage of arsenic in chicken feed has contaminated local waterways in areas where the birds’ manure is used as fertilizer. The report was commissioned by the Maryland House of Delegates.

New data suggests that arsenic isn’t the only potentially hazardous substance present. Scientists at the Johns Hopkins University and Arizona State University have discovered that birds are also routinely fed illegal antibiotics, caffeine, and even chemical compounds found in common medications. Testing feather meal from factory-farm chickens, scientists found traces of antibiotics called fluoroquinolones, which are banned in poultry production due to their potential to breed antibiotic-resistant pathogens. Furthermore, researchers found evidence of the active ingredients in Benadryl, Tylenol, and even Prozac, found in Chinese chicken meal-all of which may be used to reduce anxiety among chicken, as stress toughens the birds’ meat and inhibits their growth.

According to a new study also released in May 2012, this by Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, nearly half of all store-bought chicken is contaminated with E. coli. The organization tested

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<sup>1</sup> T. Colin Campbell, PhD, *The China Study* (Dallas: BenBella, 2006), 66.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pcrm.org/images/slider/PCRM%202013ProgressReport.pdf> document page 9

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.pcrm.org/images/slider/PCRM%202013ProgressReport.pdf> document page 9

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.pcrm.org/images/slider/PCRM%202013ProgressReport.pdf> document page 9

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.pcrm.org/images/slider/PCRM%202013ProgressReport.pdf> document page 9

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.pcrm.org/images/slider/PCRM%202013ProgressReport.pdf> document page 9

chicken products purchased at major supermarket chains in 10 US cities, and found that each city had items test positive for the potentially harmful bacteria. PCRM President Neal Barnard, MD says “Most consumers do not realize that feces are in the chicken products they purchase. Food labels discuss contamination as if it is simply the presence of bacteria, but people need to know that it means much more than that.”

Consumer Reports in a December 2013 article showed that 97% of chicken breasts they tested contained bacterial, including ‘organic’ brands.<sup>7</sup> Why would someone eat something where Consumer Reports writes “That’s one reason we advise you to prevent raw chicken or its juices from touching any other food”.<sup>8</sup> Why risk hospitalization or death?

Finally, don’t overlook past problems that could resurface at any time. Headlines of the recent past announced the FDA found evidence of salmonella in **chicken feed** which led to an egg recall and found Melamine in **Chicken Feed**.

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/magazine/2014/02/the-high-cost-of-cheap-chicken/index.htm>

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