

# Poultry Farming

Poultry farming is a form of animal husbandry in which domesticated birds such as chickens, turkeys, ducks or geese are raised to produce meat and eggs.

Poultry farming used to be simple. Farmers would raise chickens for meat and eggs. The chickens were fed well and had more space to live in. Chickens had freedom back then.

Nowadays, poultry farming has become more abusive. Birds are given antibiotics to prevent illness but, at the rate that antibiotics are given to birds, it creates more potential for antibiotic resistance in bacteria. Also, birds have their beaks trimmed which causes acute pain and somewhat incapacitates their ability to smell and eat. Furthermore, birds are stuffed into cages where bacteria such as E. Coli and Salmonella plus diseases like Avian Influenza could spread. As well, birds are fed GMO feed which is unhealthy for them. Finally, the most saddening part of all is that today, chick culling. This is where male chicks are shredded up because they are useless since they can't grow fast enough to produce meat and they don't lay eggs. Some unhealthy female chicks are also shredded but majority of chicks are male. It may seem like it is nothing much, maybe a few thousand chicks are slaughtered per year. However, around 7 billion chicks are slaughtered per year worldwide.

Poultry farming has devastating effects. Greenhouse gases are emitted in order to grow feed for the birds. Furthermore, lots of water and energy is used to produce meat. Also, even worse is the chicken manure which is disposed of poorly. Tons of poop is dumped into crops on land neighboring poultry farms. However, there is too much poop to just dump onto crops so, a lot of scat ends up in waterways, polluting the water with a ton of nitrogen and phosphorus. This additional phosphorus and nitrogen results in eutrophication and algae grows rapidly resulting in aquatic "Dead Zones". One last thing. Humans get affected as well. We can become sick from antibiotic resistant bacteria that is in the meat we eat. Furthermore, E. Coli and Salmonella could spread from chickens to employees. Also, there could be an outbreak of Avian Influenza.

A sustainable alternative would be to farm organically. Dispose of manure properly and let the birds eat well again. This way less greenhouse gases needed since less GMO feed is being grown. Also, less eutrophication in water since waterways are less polluted. Plus, we won't get sick from the antibiotics that industrial, intensive farming would have given to chickens. As an individual, the main thing is to eat less chicken so that there would be less demand for more meat.