

The Most Contaminated Poultry Plants in the U.S.

This evaluation of the most contaminated poultry plants in the U.S. is based on data from the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which posts the category status of individual plants based on *Salmonella* test results. The FSIS category definitions are as follows:

- **Category 1:** These are the best performing plants that have achieved 50 percent or less of the maximum allowable percent positive for *Salmonella* during the most recent one year window.
- **Category 2:** These are average performing plants that meet the maximum allowable percent positive but have some results greater than 50 percent of the maximum allowable percent positive for *Salmonella*.
- **Category 3:** **These are the worst performing plants, with results that exceed the maximum allowable percent positive for *Salmonella*. This designation means the conditions at these plants make it very difficult to control *Salmonella* contamination.**

The plants included in the chart have been in Category 3 for most, if not all, of the past six months, meaning there is a higher risk of a *Salmonella* outbreak originating from one of these plants. Note that outbreaks can originate from plants in any category.

Chicken Slaughter and Processing Explained

This [infographic](#) from the National Chicken Council provides an explanation of how chickens are slaughtered and processed for meat. The process can be summarized in four major steps:

1. **Receiving and slaughter.** Chickens arrive at the plant from the farm where they are rendered unconscious and slaughtered.
2. **Cleaning and Evisceration.** This part of the process is highly automated where machines remove feathers, internal organs, and feet, and carcasses are washed and inspected by the USDA. Chickens are tested for bacteria, like *Salmonella*.
3. **Processing and Preparation.** Carcasses are cut and deboned to become different products – chicken breasts, drumsticks, thighs, and wings. Chickens also may be cooked in the plant or sent to another plant to be made into other products such as nuggets, patties and frozen meals.
4. **Packaging and shipping.** Chicken products are packaged, bagged or boxed. These products cannot leave the plant without being inspected by USDA. Finally, the chicken is shipped in a refrigerated truck to grocery stores, restaurants or distribution centers.

The chart below uses USDA product type designations for the *Salmonella* test results. Therefore, ‘young chicken carcasses’ or ‘young turkey carcasses’ refers to the plants that conduct slaughtering, cleaning and evisceration. The ‘chicken parts’ or ‘comminuted’ (typically ground product) designations refer to the plants that conduct processing and preparation. For plants that do both slaughter and processing, the segment of the plant in Category 3 is listed while the other product type not in that category is designated in parentheses.

What Consumers Can Do

- Wash your hands in warm soapy water throughout the cooking process – before prepping, after handling raw meat, and again when finished. Also wash knives used on meat before using them to cut other foods.
- Use separate cutting boards for meat and other food products.
- Cook poultry to an internal temperature of **165° F** and use a meat thermometer to check.
- While shopping at the grocery store, keep raw meats in a disposable bag, away from other foods, especially ones you're likely to eat without cooking like fruits and vegetables.
- In the refrigerator, store raw meat in a bag or bowl to prevent leaking.
- Thaw frozen meat in the refrigerator so that it stays below 40° F. Doing so will impede the growth of bacteria.
- Avoid rinsing raw meat because it can spread bacteria around your sink or counter.

Bird Flu Implications

It is highly unlikely that chickens or turkeys with highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) would make it to a slaughter plant and be processed into human food. Given its virulence, animals die quickly if contracted with HPAI and the virus spreads rapidly within a farm. As a result, farmers immediately destroy entire flocks if HPAI is detected to prevent further spread and before any birds are shipped to slaughter plants.

However, low pathogenic avian influenza (LPAI) (specifically [H9N2](#)) has the potential of increasing the risk of *Salmonella* contamination because chickens infected with both LPAI and *Salmonella* will shed more *Salmonella* and thus increase the chance of contamination of other birds in the flock. Also, the potential exists for LPAI (specifically [A\(H5\)](#) and [A\(H7\)](#)) viruses to evolve into HPAI.

The Most Contaminated Poultry Plants in the U.S.

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
Alabama	
Mar-Jac Poultry Jasper, AL USDA Plant ID Number(s): P1307	Young chicken carcasses. Focus is on the foodservice industry .
Arkansas	
B&R Meat Processing Winslow, AR USDA Plant ID Number(s): M46910+P46910+V46910	Young chicken carcasses. Wild game processor .
Cargill Meat Solutions Springdale, AR USDA Plant ID Number(s): M13289+P963	Comminuted turkey Cargill turkey brands available here .
Simmons Prepared Foods Van Buren, AR USDA Plant ID Number(s): M5837+P5837	Chicken parts Supplies foodservice industry, large retailers and food chains. More information here .
Tyson Foods (Chicken plant) Springdale, AR USDA Plant ID Number(s): M5842+P5842+V5842	Young chicken carcasses Tyson chicken brands available here .
California	
Adesa International Ontario, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M44127+P44127	Chicken parts No information readily available on products.
Certified Meat Products Fresno, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M31932+P31932	Chicken parts Serves a variety of food service, retail, and private labels.
Foster Farms Fresno, CA (Cherry St. location) USDA Plant ID Number(s): P6137A	Young chicken carcasses, chicken parts Product list available here .
Foster Farms Livingston, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M6137+P6137	Chicken parts Product list available here . (Young chicken carcasses.)*
Heatherfield Foods Ontario, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M4846+P4846	Comminuted chicken Product list available here .

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
Pitman Farms (Chicken) Sanger, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M27389+P27389+V27389	Young chicken carcasses, comminuted chicken List of brands available here . (Chicken parts)*
T&J Sausage Kitchen Anaheim, CA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M4934+P4934	Comminuted chicken Product list available here . (Chicken parts)*
Delaware	
Allen Harim Foods Harbeson, DE USDA Plant ID Number(s): P935	Chicken parts Product location link is available here . (Young chicken carcasses)*
Georgia	
Country Ranch Food Products Marietta, GA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M20091+P20091	Comminuted chicken List of distribution partners available here .
Fieldale Farms Corporation Gainesville, GA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M12650+P12650	Chicken parts Supplies many grocery store chains with private label chicken products .
Koch Foods of Cumming Georgia Cumming, GA USDA Plant ID Number(s):P19378	Chicken parts No information readily available on products.
Mulberry Farms Gainesville, GA USDA Plant ID Number(s):M12604+P12604	Comminuted chicken No information readily available on products.
Illinois	
Best Chicago Meat Company Chicago, IL USDA Plant ID Number(s):M1791+P27353	Chicken parts Product list available here . (Comminuted chicken)*
Wabash Poultry Processing Forrest, IL USDA Plant ID Number(s): P46248A	Young chicken carcasses No information readily available on products.
Indiana	
Perdue Foods (Turkey processing) Washington, IN USDA Plant ID Number(s): P286	Comminuted chicken Perdue turkey product list available here

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
Kentucky	
Misty Lea Farm Poultry Processing Pembroke, KY USDA Plant ID Number(s): P40345	Young chicken carcasses No information readily available on products. (Chicken parts)*
Maine	
Tide Mill Organic Farm Township of Edmunds, ME USDA Plant ID Number(s): P1605	Young chicken carcasses List of products available here .
Maryland	
IHSAN Farms* Princess Anne, MD USDA Plant ID Number(s): P46897	Young chicken carcasses, chicken parts List of retail distributors available here .
Locust Point Farms* Elkton, MD USDA Plant ID Number(s): P39915+V39915	Young chicken, chicken parts, comminuted chicken List of products available here .
Massachusetts	
Samuel Holmes Inc. Everett, MA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P1525	Chicken parts Supplies the food service industry. Company information available here .
Michigan	
Michigan Turkey Producers Co-op Wyoming, MI USDA Plant ID Number(s): M20935+P20935	Comminuted turkey List of products available here . (Young turkey carcasses)*
Missouri	
Butterball (Turkey) Carthage, MO USDA Plant ID Number(s): M8727+P8727+V8727	Comminuted turkey List of products available here . (Young turkey carcasses)*
Campo Lindo Farms Lathrop, MO USDA Plant ID Number(s): M27297+P27297	Young chicken List of stores and restaurants available here .

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
<i>New Jersey</i>	
Martin's Specialty Sausage Co Mickleton, NJ USDA Plant ID Number(s): M5351+P5351	Comminuted chicken List of products available here .
<i>New York</i>	
La Belle Farm Ferndale, NY USDA Plant ID Number(s): P19150+V19150	Young chicken carcasses, chicken parts List of products available here .
Pelleh Poultry Swan Lake, NY USDA Plant ID Number(s): M44121+P44121	Young chicken carcasses, chicken parts List of products available here .
White Lake Foods Ferndale, NY USDA Plant ID Number(s): M48281+P48281+V48281	Young chicken carcasses No information readily available on products. (Chicken parts)*
<i>North Carolina</i>	
Butterball Mount Olive, NC USDA Plant ID Number(s): M7345+P7345	Comminuted turkey List of products available here . (Young turkey carcasses)*
Butterball Raeford, NC USDA Plant ID Number(s): M46870+P46870	Comminuted turkey List of products available here . (Young turkey carcasses)*
Union Foods Rocky Mount, NC USDA Plant ID Number(s): M34371+P34371	Chicken parts No information readily available on products.
<i>Ohio</i>	
Gerber Poultry, Inc. Kidron, OH USDA Plant ID Number(s): P20604	Chicken parts List of products available here . (Young chicken carcasses, comminuted)*
<i>Pennsylvania</i>	
Al-Kawthar Poultry Stevens, PA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P48466	Young chicken carcasses No information readily available on products.
David Elliot Poultry Farm, Inc. Scranton, PA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M7559+P134+V7559	Young chicken carcasses, chicken parts List of products and store locator available here .

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
Sensenig Turkey Farm, LLC Lititz, PA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P38466	Comminuted turkey No information readily available on products. (Young turkey carcasses)*
<i>Rhode Island</i>	
Baffoni's Poultry Farm Johnston, RI USDA Plant ID Number(s): P9378+V9378	Young chicken carcasses List of products available here .
Bayside Foods, Inc. (Doing business as Bonollo Provisions) Providence, RI USDA Plant ID Number(s): M5097+P5097	Chicken parts List of products available here .
Cola Foods Cranston, RI USDA Plant ID Number(s): M5268+P5268	Comminuted chicken List of brands available here .
<i>South Carolina</i>	
Palmetto Pigeon Plant Sumter, SC USDA Plant ID Number(s): P211	Young chicken carcasses No information readily available on products.
Vital Foods Abbeville, SC USDA Plant ID Number(s): M18237+P18237	Comminuted chicken No information readily available on products.
<i>Texas</i>	
H-E-B Meat Plant San Antonio, TX USDA Plant ID Number(s): M7231+P7231	Comminuted chicken List of brands available here . (Chicken parts)*
J & Q Food (Doing business as Evergreen Poultry) Fort Worth, TX USDA Plant ID Number(s): M45457+P45457	Chicken parts No information readily available on products.
Windy Meadows Family Farm Campbell, TX USDA Plant ID Number(s): P44992	Chicken parts More information available here . (Young chicken carcasses)*
<i>Vermont</i>	
Misty Knoll Farm New Haven, VT USDA Plant ID Number(s): P18978	Young chicken List of products available here . (Chicken parts)*

Plant Name	Product Types/Brands
Virginia	
Cargill Meat Solutions (Turkey products) Dayton, VA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P18	Comminuted chicken Cargill turkey brands available here . (Young turkey carcasses)*
New Market Poultry New Market, VA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P4602A	Chicken parts List of products available here .
James River Correctional Center State Farm, VA USDA Plant ID Number(s): M31843+P31843	Comminuted chicken No information readily available on products.
Washington	
Foster Farms Kelso, WA USDA Plant ID Number(s): P6164A	Chicken parts Product list available here . (Young chicken carcasses)*
Wisconsin	
Fortune Wisconsin, LLC Green Bay, WI USDA Plant ID Number(s): M1759+P1759	Chicken parts No information readily available on products.

* Represents other segment(s) of a plant that are not in Category 3.