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POULTRY WITH EUROPEAN  
GUARANTEE**



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IT'S FROM  
EUROPE**





## EUROPEAN POULTRY IN A NUTSHELL

### The essentials on European poultry meat

Poultry is an important part of the European diet. In the past ten years, EU consumption has increased by 23% to currently 25.3 kilograms per capita per year. And experts predict a further slight increase over the next decade.

Worldwide demand for this affordable source of protein is growing as well, and Europe enjoys a good reputation as a supplier among potential customers.

The European poultry sector is well prepared, both for the growing

demand and for the high requirements regarding food safety, animal welfare and environmental protection. The EU authorities and the stakeholders in the sector are working hand in hand to ensure uniformly high standards across the production chain. No matter which EU country the poultry meat comes from, consumers can always be confident that they are buying safe, high-quality poultry meat produced with high European standards.

### Strong voice of the poultry industry The European umbrella organisation AVEC

At European level, the Brussels-based umbrella organisation AVEC (European Association of Poultry Processors and Poultry Trade), firmly pulls together the threads of all national member organisations. It represents around 95% of poultry meat producers in the EU and is in constant contact with all relevant EU and international organisations and decision-makers.

AVEC shares an office in Brussels with the European Live Poultry and Hatching Egg Association (ELPHA) as well as with the European Poultry Breeders (EPB).

AVEC is a part of The European Livestock Voice – a multi-stakeholder group of 11 like-minded partners in the livestock food chain, which represent sectors ranging from animal health to feed, breeding and farming. They aim to inform the public about the societal value of livestock production and its contribution to global challenges, offering an alternative narrative to current debates.

### European poultry as a global leader

The European poultry sector plays a relevant role on the global stage. With a production volume of 15.8 million tonnes carcass weight in 2019, the EU is the third-largest poultry meat producer in the world, after the USA and China. The vast majority of the EU production is consumed in the European Union itself. Around 1.7 million tonnes of EU poultry production (product weight) are exported, mainly to Southeast Asia, other non-EU European countries, and Africa.

### European poultry contributes to the dynamism of EU economy

Assessing poultry production, chicken meat accounts for the largest share (82%) of EU poultry production, with 13 million tonnes, followed by Turkey meat (2.1 million tonnes – 13%) and duck meat (550,000 tonnes – 3.5%).

Domestically, the EU poultry sector plays an important role not only in its function as a meat supplier, but also as an economic factor.

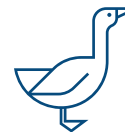
### EU POULTRY PRODUCTION



82%  
Chicken



13%  
Turkey



3,5%  
Duck



1,5%  
Other species

More than 370,000 people work directly in breeding, growing, fattening, slaughtering, and processing – most of them in one of the 25,000 family farms located mostly in rural areas. In addition, there are many indirect jobs, for example in the feed sector, in packaging, and in the machinery industry that produces the equipment used in slaughterhouses. This accounts for 38 billion euros of value in poultry meat production in the EU.

## ECONOMY



370 000  
PEOPLE WORKING  
IN RURAL AREAS



25 000  
FAMILY POULTRY FARMS IN THE EU



€ 38 BILLION  
VALUE OF POULTRY MEAT PRODUCTION IN EU

# EUROPEAN POULTRY IS PART OF THE SOLUTION



## The EU poultry industry sets global standards

In recent years, consumers have been paying increasing attention to how their food is produced. A growing focus is on animal welfare and sustainable production. The European poultry meat sector feels well prepared to meet these expectations.

The sector is proud to produce according to the very strict EU rules that apply throughout the entire production chain – “from farm to fork” (and even earlier in the chain). The sector is committed to continuously improving production conditions in terms of resource conservation and animal welfare. It has achieved a lot in this respect: the current standards that apply to EU poultry meat are among the highest in the world. Here is a brief overview of the central aspects of EU poultry meat supply chain.

## Animal welfare

Animal welfare is a top priority in the EU. Scientifically based standards guarantee that poultry farming meets the same minimum requirements in all Member States. As broiler farming accounts for almost 87 per cent of European production, there is particularly detailed legislation in this area. In addition, the individual countries have the option of adopting more stringent provisions. In the EU, fattening poultry is reared in flocks in floor systems.

This allows the birds to move freely and perform their natural behaviours. Also, a maximum stocking density for chickens has been set. The animals always have access to fresh drinking water and feed. The floor is covered with natural bedding, and the lighting provides a natural day-night rhythm.

## Producers who care for the animal health

For the farmers, the welfare of their animals is the first priority. Responsible care, in-depth knowledge, and longstanding experience are the most decisive guarantors of animal welfare. Farmers inspect their flocks at least twice a day and document all the relevant parameters. Strict regulations also apply to barn hygiene. All barns are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected every time a flock is sent to the slaughterhouse, so the surroundings are optimal when a new flock of day-old chickens arrive. EU regulations on animal health are strict and stipulate that the animals must receive feed appropriate to their species and age. Correct feeding is important in the interests of the consumer, as it has a considerable influence on the quality of the meat. Plant ingredients such as wheat, maize and soya make up the majority of animal feed. In addition, a number of additives like vitamins and minerals are approved that improve the quality of the feed.

## Transport

The animals must be completely healthy and the strict regulations on space during transport and transport times must be observed. As a rule, the animals must not be on the road for longer than 12 hours.

## Innovation in the poultry sector

Poultry meat has a very good environmental scorecard compared to many other foods. One reason for this is the optimal feed conversion, which is associated with lower emissions. 1.5 kilogrammes of feed can produce 1 kilogramme of chicken and 2.6 kilogrammes of feed can produce 1 kilogramme of turkey. Furthermore, the area of land

required to produce one kilogramme of chicken meat is only eight square metres. EU poultry producers are also continuously developing additional measures to minimise energy consumption in their barns. Computer-assisted control technologies support them in this quest. Many farms generate their own energy, e.g. with photovoltaic or biogas systems.

## Protecting our air and water-Favourable CO<sub>2</sub> footprint and conscious avoidance of pollution

Compared to other foods, the carbon footprint of poultry meat is very low. Only 4.22 kilogrammes of CO<sub>2</sub> are produced per kilogramme of conventional poultry meat. Poultry meat is also ahead of other types of meat in terms of water consumption. And EU poultry producers always try to use the precious resource of water even more efficiently. It is not without reason that the impact on the environment has decreased over the past 15 years on several factors, such as: land used, energy, water, feed and greenhouse gas.

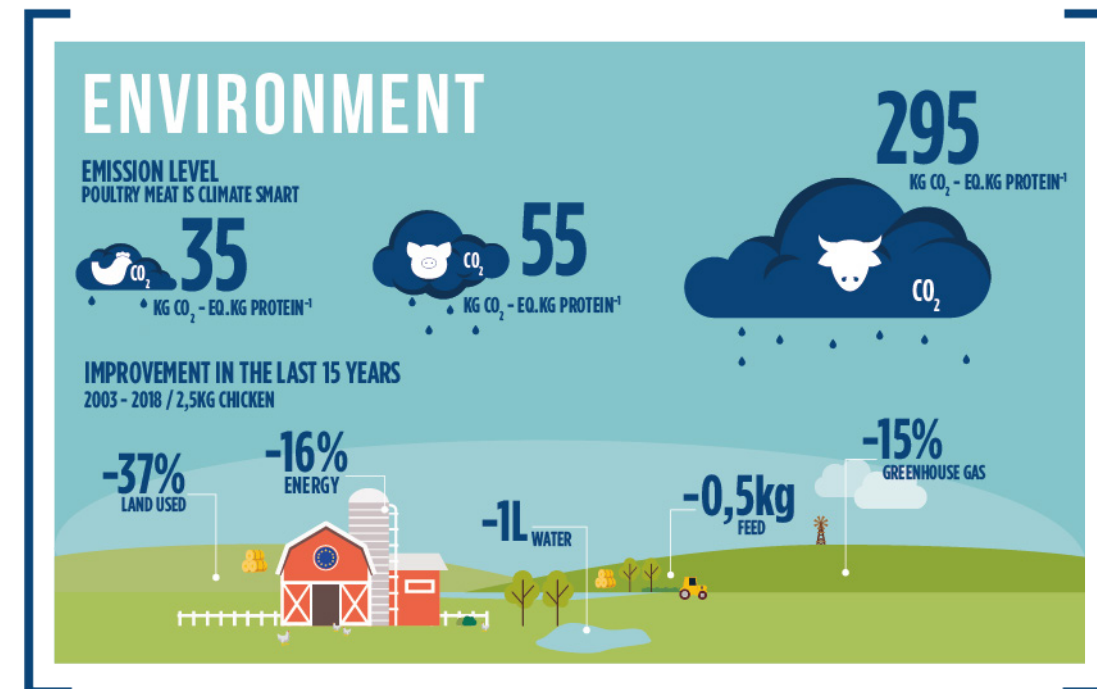
## Strong food safety rules

Strict hygiene regulations apply to the entire process. Every room and all equipment must meet high standards.

The companies are obliged to apply HACCP-based procedures. Compliance with animal welfare and hygiene requirements is monitored by official veterinarians who carry out numerous checks before and after slaughter.

Before slaughter, all animals are stunned to ensure that any avoidable pain, suffering, stress or excitement is prevented.

The official veterinarians and their assistants are present in the slaughterhouse throughout the day to supervise the operations.





# THE TRUTH ABOUT EU POULTRY MEAT



Conscious nutrition is a high priority for most people. They want to know how healthy their food is and where it comes from – and that is a good thing. Animal welfare and sustainability are important factors when it comes to eating consciously. Among the relevant information however, persistent myths abound – including some about European poultry.

## European chickens and turkeys are raised in barn

In the whole of the EU, barn farming is the only form of farming used for poultry meat production. The birds can scratch, peck and move about on the floor according to their natural needs. In the chicken barns, an optimal environment is ensured for the birds in terms of light, humidity and other parameters. In organic and open-air farming, the birds additionally have fenced-in green outdoor areas where they can move about freely.

And there is always enough drinking water for chickens, turkeys et al., as well as species- and age-appropriate feed.

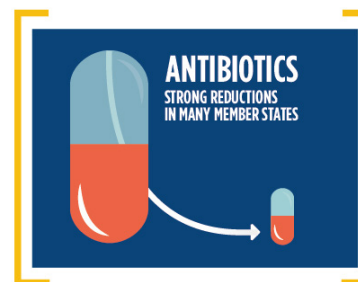
## European poultry is free from hormones

The use of hormones and growth enhancers in breeding has long been banned throughout the EU. To optimise the rearing process, producers use a much more effective and at the same time animal-friendly method: contemporary, robust and healthy poultry breeds. In combination with balanced feed and optimal environmental conditions, this enables breeders to produce high-quality meat at affordable prices.

## European poultry is free from antibiotic residues

Antibiotics may only be administered by veterinary prescription, and according to the principle ‘as little as possible, as much as necessary’. A responsible use of antibiotics is needed to treat sick animals so that their well-being is not compromised. In recent years, the use of antibiotics in the poultry sector has been drastically reduced by numerous measures across the entire breeding chain. They include

improved biosafety, the selection of robust breeds, optimised feed and barn management (temperature etc.). After treatment, the animals are slaughtered only after a legally prescribed waiting period – called the withdrawal period. This is to ensure that the meat that is later consumed by the consumer no longer contains any traces of medication in. In addition, the meat in the slaughterhouse is regularly inspected for traces of antibiotic residues.



## Poultry as a natural source of proteins

Poultry meat is naturally high in protein and relatively low in kilocalories. If we compare 28 grams of proteins, a chicken breast has less kilocalories in comparison to other rich in protein food as hazelnuts and tofu. In the same amount of proteins in grams, chicken breasts accounts for 140 kilocalories, hazelnuts for 1120 kilocalories and tofu for 275 kilocalories.

### SAME AMOUNT OF PROTEINS (28 G)



133 G CHICKEN BREAST  
**140** KCAL



188 G HAZELNUTS  
**1120** KCAL



359 G TOFU  
**275** KCAL

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For more information on this leaflet references, please consult <https://en.eu-poultry.eu/press-area/>

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