

New Ways With Chicken But Same Commitment To Nutritious Tastes

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family
Features Editor

CENTERVILLE (Lancaster Co.) — As a food, chicken has steadily grown in popularity and is a healthy food choice, but when it comes to chicken farming, the industry has taken a beating.

Farm odors, particularly chicken odors, are offensive to many people. A small sector of the population perpetrates outcries against poultry smells by trying to impose strict government regulations against the industry and limit expansion.

Although these people are well-intentioned, they are not justified.

The poultry industry wants the nonfarming community to understand the perspective of growers and their commitment to protecting the environment while producing a safe, excellent product.

The Lancaster County Poultry Association provides an annual dinner to county family living and consumer science teachers to update them on the newest scientific, nutritional research, and food preparation methods.

Recently Connie Parvis, Delmarva Poultry, explained poultry's role in the food industry. Farming practices are better today than ever before, Parvis said. Because farmers only represent two percent of the population, they have become the scapegoat for environmental problems with water and air. In many cases, farmers are unfairly blamed and no evidence exists that farming methods are the culprit, she said.

Parvis showed a video of a Delmarva farm family, who, through hard work and with respect to the land, maintain a family broiler operation.

Parvis also discussed how consumer demands influence the industry. Statistics show that in 1975, the average consumer ate 38 pounds of chicken annually, which increased to 80 pounds per capita in 2000.

The increase was attributed to the nutrition, versatility, convenience, and economical benefits of poultry.

Consumers want food tailored to their lifestyles. This is evident by the following statistics: In 1962, the average consumer purchased 83 whole chickens, 15 cut up, and 2 further processed. In 2000, these statistics changed to 9 whole chickens, 46 cut up, and 45 further processed.

Food poultry prices remain economical despite most other items increasing dramatically. After the inflation adjustment, the actual price of chicken is less today than 40 years ago.

"The poultry industry is committed to supplying the safest food product in the world," Parvis said.

Numerous recipes were distributed to the teachers to share with their students. Here are some of the recipes:

CHICKEN OLE

4 broiler-fryer chicken breast halves, boned, skinned
1 teaspoon chili powder, divided
¼ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 cup bottled picante sauce
½ cup orange marmalade
1 tablespoon minced cilantro or parsley

With meat mallet or similar flattening utensil, pound chicken breasts to ¼-inch thickness. In a small dish, mix together ½ teaspoon of the chili powder and salt. Sprinkle mixture over chicken. In frypan, place oil and heat



Connie Parvis, Delmarva Poultry, and Nelson Groff, president of Lancaster County Poultry, review statistics that show dramatic increases in poultry consumption in the past 25 years.

to medium-high temperature. Add chicken and cook, turning, about 5 minutes or until browned. Add picante sauce, marmalade, and remaining chili powder, stirring to mix. Spoon sauce over chicken. Sprinkle cilantro or parsley over all. Cook 5 minutes longer or until chicken is fork tender. Makes 4 servings.

LEMON-DILL CHICKEN SAUTE

2 whole broiler-fryer chicken breasts, halved, boned, skinned
½ cup dry breadcrumbs
1 teaspoon lemon-pepper
¼ teaspoon dried dillweed
3 tablespoons lemon juice
2 tablespoons olive oil

In a shallow dish, mix together breadcrumbs, lemon-pepper, and dillweed. In second dish, place lemon juice. Add chicken, one piece at a time, to lemon juice, then to crumb mixture, turning to coat on all sides. In large non-stick frypan, place oil and heat to medium-high temperature. Add chicken and cook, turning, about 10 minutes or until chicken is brown and fork tender. Makes 4 servings.

SWEET AND SOUR CHICKEN STIR-FRY

4 broiler-fryer chicken breast halves, boned, skinned, cut in 1-inch pieces
3 tablespoons brown sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
½ teaspoon ground ginger
¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
3 tablespoons vinegar
1 can (8 ounces) pineapple chunks in juice
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
1 large clove garlic, minced
1 cup green and red pepper strips

Rice
In bowl, place brown sugar, cornstarch, and ginger; stir to mix. Stir in soy sauce and vinegar. Add pineapple chunks with juice; set aside. In frypan, place oil and heat to medium-high temperature. Add chicken and garlic and cook, stirring, about 5 minutes or until chicken is well-browned. Add peppers and stir-fry 1 to 2 minutes or until crisp-tender. Stir reserved pineapple mixture and add to pan. Cook, stirring, until mixture boils and thickens. Serve chicken over steamed white or brown rice. Makes 4 servings.

CHICKEN JOES

1 pound ground chicken
Vegetable cooking spray
1½ cups water
1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste

1 package (1.31 ounce) Sloppy Joe seasoning mix
¼ teaspoon chili powder
6 sandwich rolls, split
Spray large non-stick frypan with vegetable cooking spray and heat to medium-high temperature. Add ground chicken and cook, stirring, about 5 minutes or until meat is browned. Drain excess fat. Add water, tomato paste, seasoning mix, and chili powder; stir to mix. Heat mixture to boiling; reduce heat to low and cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Spoon ½ cup chicken mixture over bottom half of each roll; top with remaining half roll. Makes 6 servings.

Fat Watcher's Tips

Chicken has long been recognized as a nutritious, low-fat food, but fat content can be further reduced by following these simple tips.

- Trim chicken of visible fatty deposits before cooking.
- Remove chicken skin before eating. The latest research shows little difference in fat content if chicken is cooked with or without skin as long as the skin isn't consumed.
- Broil, bake, steam, stir-fry, or poach chicken instead of frying.
- Roast or broil chicken on a rack so fat can drip off during cooking.
- When roasting or broiling chicken, baste with defatted chicken broth, wine, or citrus juice instead of butter or oil.
- To defat broth, soups, and stews, place in freezer for 30 minutes or refrigerate overnight. Fat will solidify on top of liquid for easy removal.
- Reduce the amount of fat in chicken recipes. Most recipes calling for large amounts of fat are equally good with no more than two tablespoons.
- Use a non-stick skillet when possible. Spray with vegetable cooking spray to prevent sticking.
- Replace oil in marinades with fresh lemon juice, lime juice, wine, or vinegar.
- Look for recipes that use chicken in combination with other low-fat ingredients such as vegetables, fruits, herbs, spices, mustards, and salsa.

QUICK CHICKEN AND BROCCOLI ALFREDO

2 cups diced, cooked chicken~
8 ounces uncooked fettuccine
1½ cups frozen broccoli florets
1 can (10¼ ounces) reduced fat condensed cream of mushroom soup
½ cup reduced fat milk
¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
½ teaspoon ground red pepper

In large saucepan, cook fettuccine according to package directions. Add broccoli for the last 4 minutes of cooking time. Drain fettuccine and broccoli; set aside. In same pan, mix soup, milk, cheese, chicken, and red pepper and heat until mixture is hot and cheese is melted. Stir in fettuccine and broccoli; heat through, stirring occasionally. Makes 4 servings.

-Use home cooked chicken or a ready-to-eat, packaged supermarket product.

APRICOT GLAZED CHICKEN

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
½ teaspoon seasoned salt
1 tablespoon vegetable oil
½ cup apricot preserves
¼ cup reduced sodium soy sauce
2 tablespoons cider vinegar

With meat mallet or similar flattening utensil, pound chicken to ¼-inch thickness. Sprinkle seasoned salt over chicken. In frypan, place oil and heat to medium-high temperature. Add chicken and cook, turning, about 6 minutes or until chicken is brown on both sides. In a small bowl, mix together preserves, soy sauce, and vinegar. Spoon over chicken. Reduce temperature to medium-low and cook, stirring and turning chicken occasionally, 6 to 8 minutes or until chicken is fork tender and well glazed. Makes 4 servings.

LAYERED CHICKEN PASTA SALAD

2 cups diced cooked chicken~

12 ounces uncooked bow ties pasta
½ cup bottled vinaigrette salad dressing
1 cup frozen peas, thawed
3 plum tomatoes, sliced
½ cup sliced green onion
2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Return pasta to same pan; toss drained pasta with 2 tablespoons vinaigrette dressing. Arrange half of pasta mixture in large glass bowl. Layer peas, tomatoes, green onion, and chicken over pasta. Top with remaining pasta. Sprinkle with basil and drizzle remaining dressing over all. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Toss before serving. Makes 6 servings.

-Use home cooked chicken or a ready-to-eat, packaged supermarket product.

EASY CURRIED CHICKEN AND RICE

2 cups diced cooked chicken~
2 tablespoons butter or margarine
¼ cup chopped onion
1 package (7 ounces) chicken flavor rice mix
2¾ cups hot water
½ cup raisins
1 teaspoon curry powder
¼ cup slivered almonds, toasted

In large frypan, place butter or margarine and melt over medium heat. Add onion and rice from rice mix and cook, stirring, until rice is lightly browned. Stir in water, raisins, seasoning packet from rice mix, and curry powder. Cover and cook over low heat 15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Top with almonds. Makes 4 servings.

-Use home cooked chicken or a ready-to-eat, packaged supermarket product.

Chicken Myths, Misconceptions

Myth: Hormones are used in chicken production.

Fact: No artificial or added hormones are allowed by the U.S. government in the production of chicken in the United States. Steroids are similarly banned. Reports to the contrary are simply untrue.

Myth: Yellow-skinned chicken has more fat than lighter-skinned chicken.

Fact: Differences in skin color are the result of differences in the chicken's diet. Contrary to popular belief, skin color does not affect nutritional value, flavor, tenderness, or fat content.

Myth: White meat chicken is more nutritious than dark meat.

Fact: White meat is lower in fat and calories, but skinless dark meat is still lower in fat than many cuts of red meat. Dark meat is an equally good source of protein and contains important vitamins and minerals. Dark meat supplies more iron than white meat. Both dark and white meat chicken are healthful food choices.

Myth: Darkening around bones is a sign of spoilage in cooked chicken.

Fact: Darkening is caused by natural pigment that seeps through the porous bones of

chicken during cooking. The pigment contains iron and is safe to eat.

Myth: Chicken breast meat cooked with skin on is higher in fat after the skin is removed than chicken breast meat cooked without skin.

Fact: A thin membrane between the skin and flesh of the chicken holds moisture in the meat while keeping the fat out. So it makes no significant difference in fat content if skin is removed before or after cooking.

Myth: American consumers eat more beef than either chicken or pork.

Fact: On average, U.S. per capita consumption of chicken is about 80 pounds, compared with 69 pounds of beef, and 52 pounds of pork. Chicken is the number one protein choice of American consumers.

Myth: Chicken feet are not edible.

Fact: If properly cleaned and inspected, chicken feet are not only edible, they are considered a delicacy in the Far East.

For additional information on chicken, contact Delmarva Poultry Industry, Inc. (DPI) at (302) 856-9037 or visit the Website at www.dpichicken.org.