

# **Livestock, Poultry & Seed Programs**

## **Agricultural Marketing Service**

*Richard Lawson – National Poultry Supervisor*

*Don Dixon – Central Regional Director*



A large indoor poultry farm, likely a broiler house, filled with thousands of white chickens. The birds are densely packed on the floor. Numerous red, cone-shaped feeders are suspended from the ceiling, providing food to the flock. The facility has a high ceiling with visible structural beams and large windows along the sides, allowing natural light to enter. The overall scene depicts a large-scale commercial poultry production environment.

**<http://www.ams.usda.gov/>**

# **Advantages of USDA Poultry Grading Service**

**Independent third party opinion on product quality based on the U.S. Standards for Poultry.**

**Assures the buyer of product quality without actually seeing the product.**

**Offers the certification required to market poultry in domestic and foreign markets.**

**Certifies that product meets the requirements of private industry specifications.**



# **Advantages of USDA Poultry Grading Service**

**Basis for fair bidding between suppliers.**

**Assures buyer the receipt of high quality  
product year round.**

**Product rejections and other problems at  
receiving locations are greatly reduced.**

**Lets the customer know that you have done  
your best to assure receipt of top quality  
poultry.**



# AMS CERTIFIES

- Sixty Percent Chicken
- Eighty Percent Turkey

# Grading and Inspection

## What's the Difference?



U.S. Grade A Poultry



U.S. Inspected Poultry

# U.S. Inspected Poultry

- **Inspection refers to the safety of poultry and the accuracy of their labels.**
- **Both the products and plants' systems for sanitation and preparation of products are inspected to assure they are safe.**
- **Inspection involves only those properties related to wholesomeness and labeling, not quality.**
- **Inspection is mandatory and required by law.**



**USDA, FSIS**

**Inspecting For**

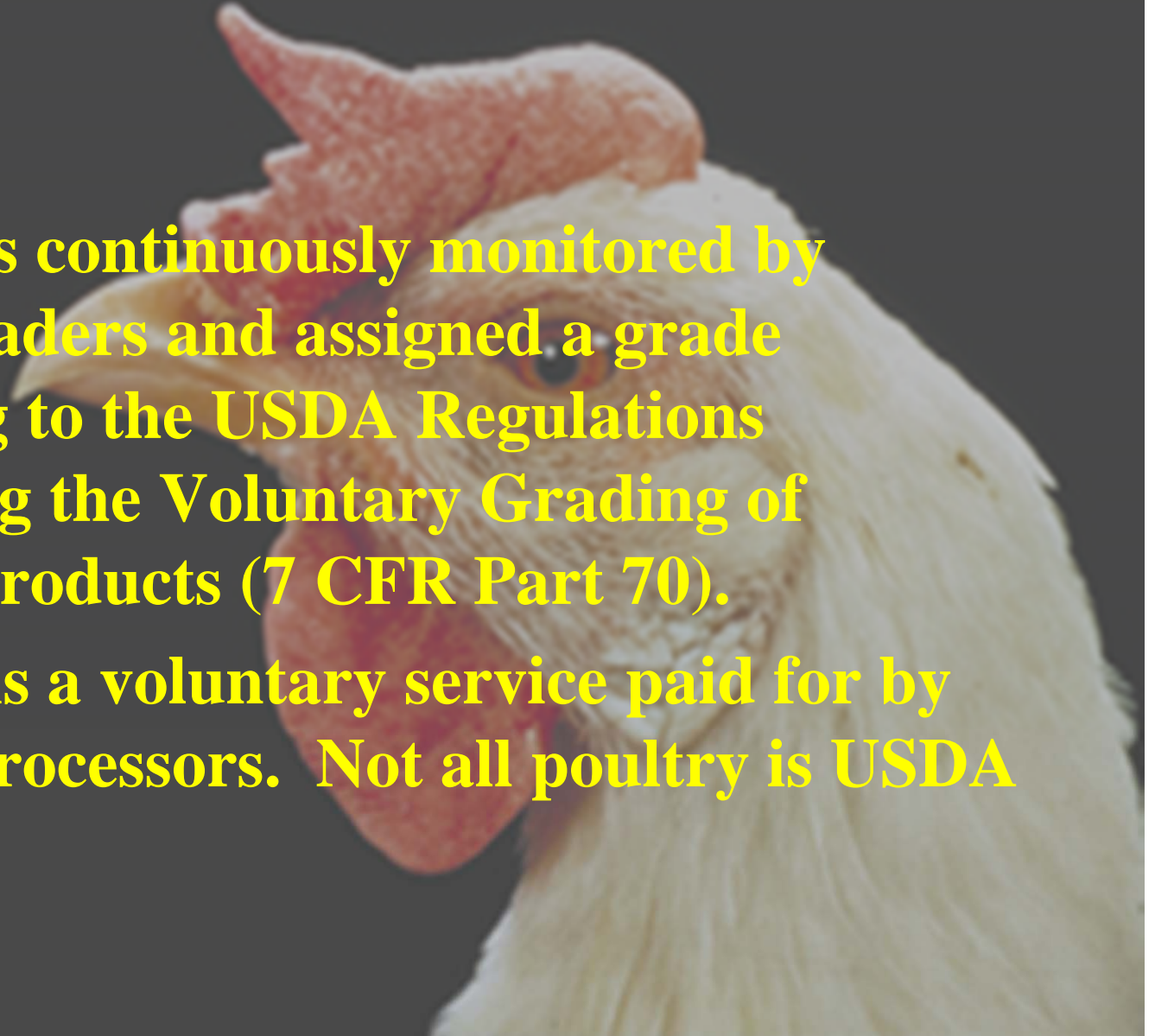
**Wholesomeness**

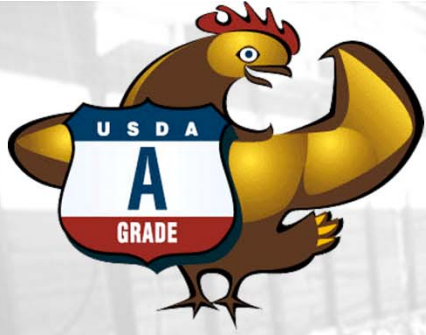




# *U.S. GRADED POULTRY*

- Product is continuously monitored by USDA graders and assigned a grade according to the USDA Regulations Governing the Voluntary Grading of Poultry Products (7 CFR Part 70).
- Grading is a voluntary service paid for by poultry processors. Not all poultry is USDA graded.





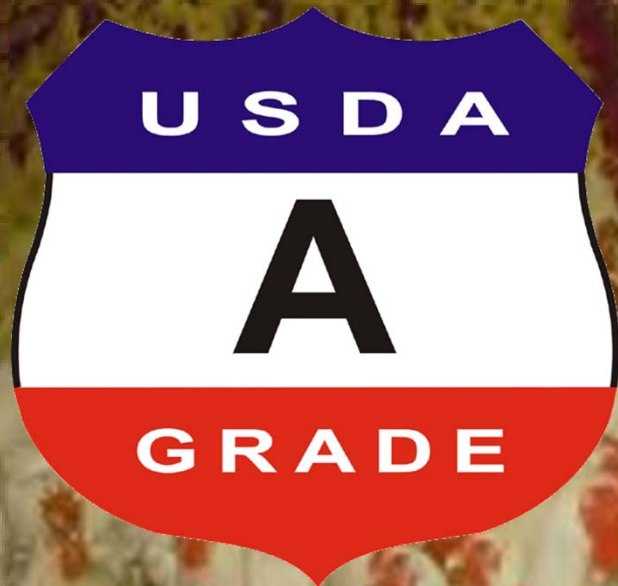
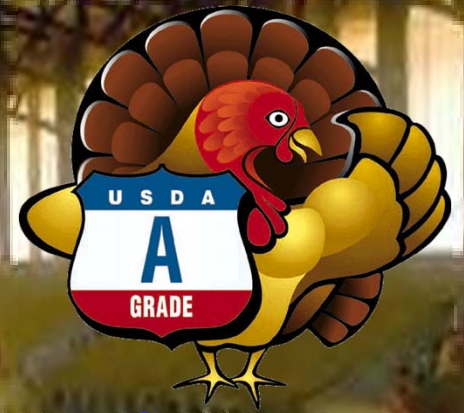
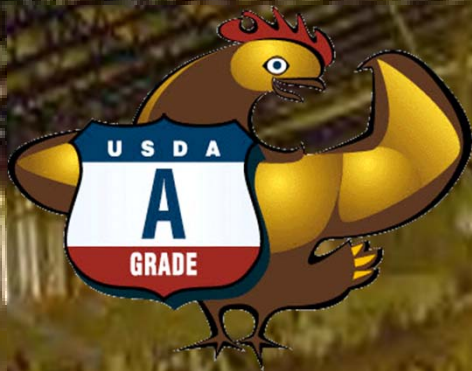
**Q**uality is defined as the inherent properties of any product that determines its relative degree of excellence or value.

The conditions and characteristics that a customer or consumer wants and is willing to pay for can be considered in a broad sense, “**Quality Factors.**”

# Grade Standards for Poultry

- **US Grade A, B, C**
  - **Confirmation**
  - **Fleshing**
  - **Fat Covering**
  - **Defeathering**
  - **Exposed Flesh**
  - **Disjointed / Broken Bones, Missing Parts**
  - **Discoloration**
  - **Freezing Defects**



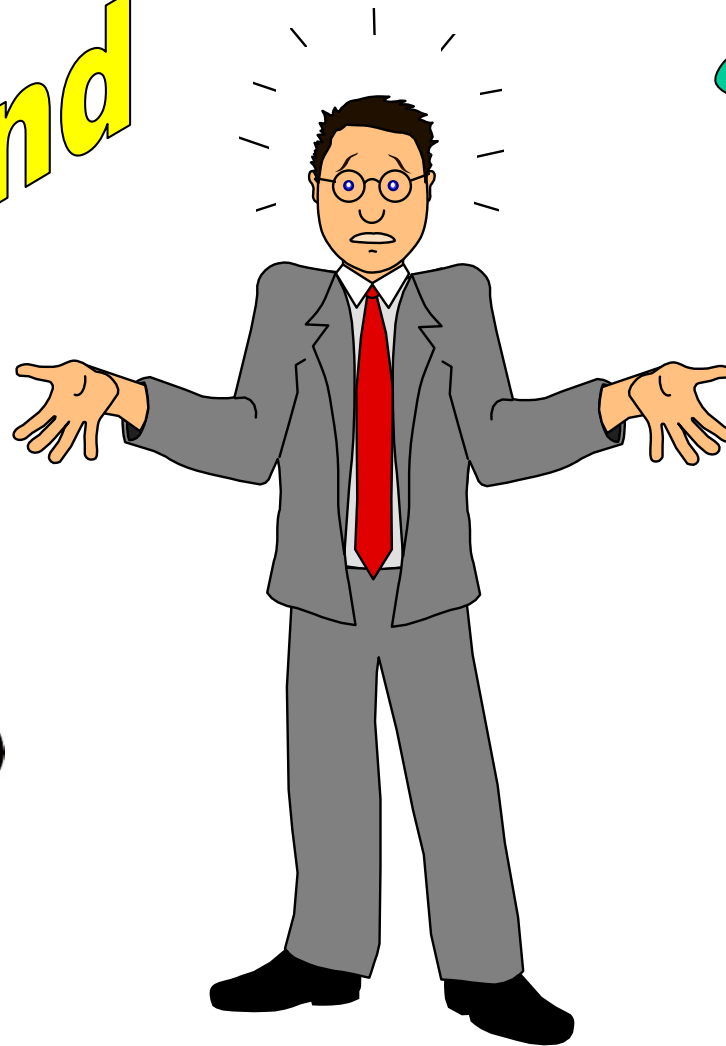


Quality  
Grade  
Factors

# Grading Factors

*Kind*

**Chicken**



*Class*

**Broiler/Fryer**

**Capon**

**Cornish Hen**

**Fowl**

**Roaster**

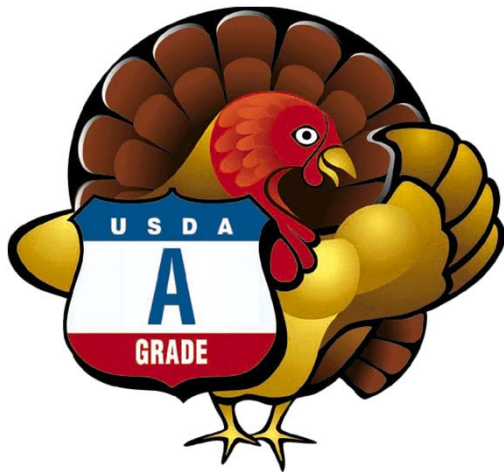
**Rooster**

# Grading Factors

*Kind*

*Class*

**Turkey**




**Young Tom/Hen**

**Yearling turkey**

**Fryer-roaster**

**Mature/old**

**Turkey**

A white chicken is standing in a grassy field. In the background, there is a barn and some trees under a clear sky. The image is slightly faded to make the text stand out.

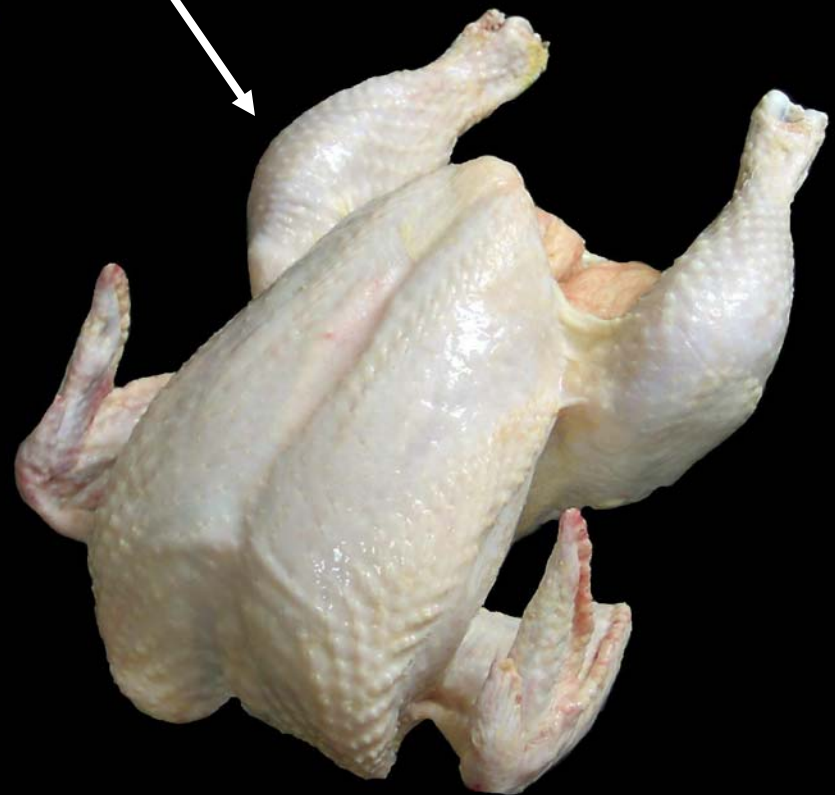
*For whole carcasses  
and parts, the  
quality factors  
include:*



# Conformation

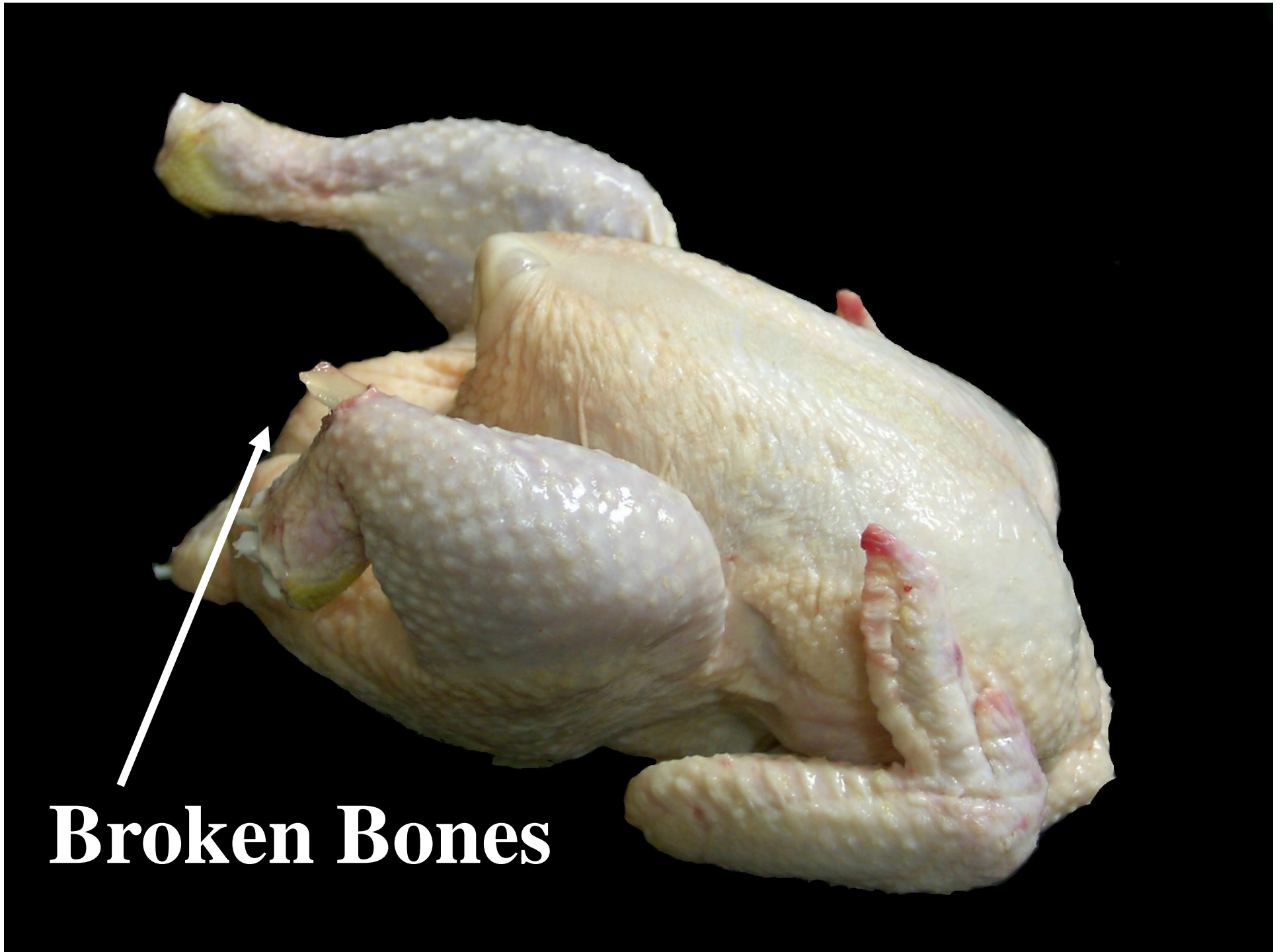


**Good  
Conformation**



**Poor  
Conformation**





**Broken Bones**



**Broken Bones**

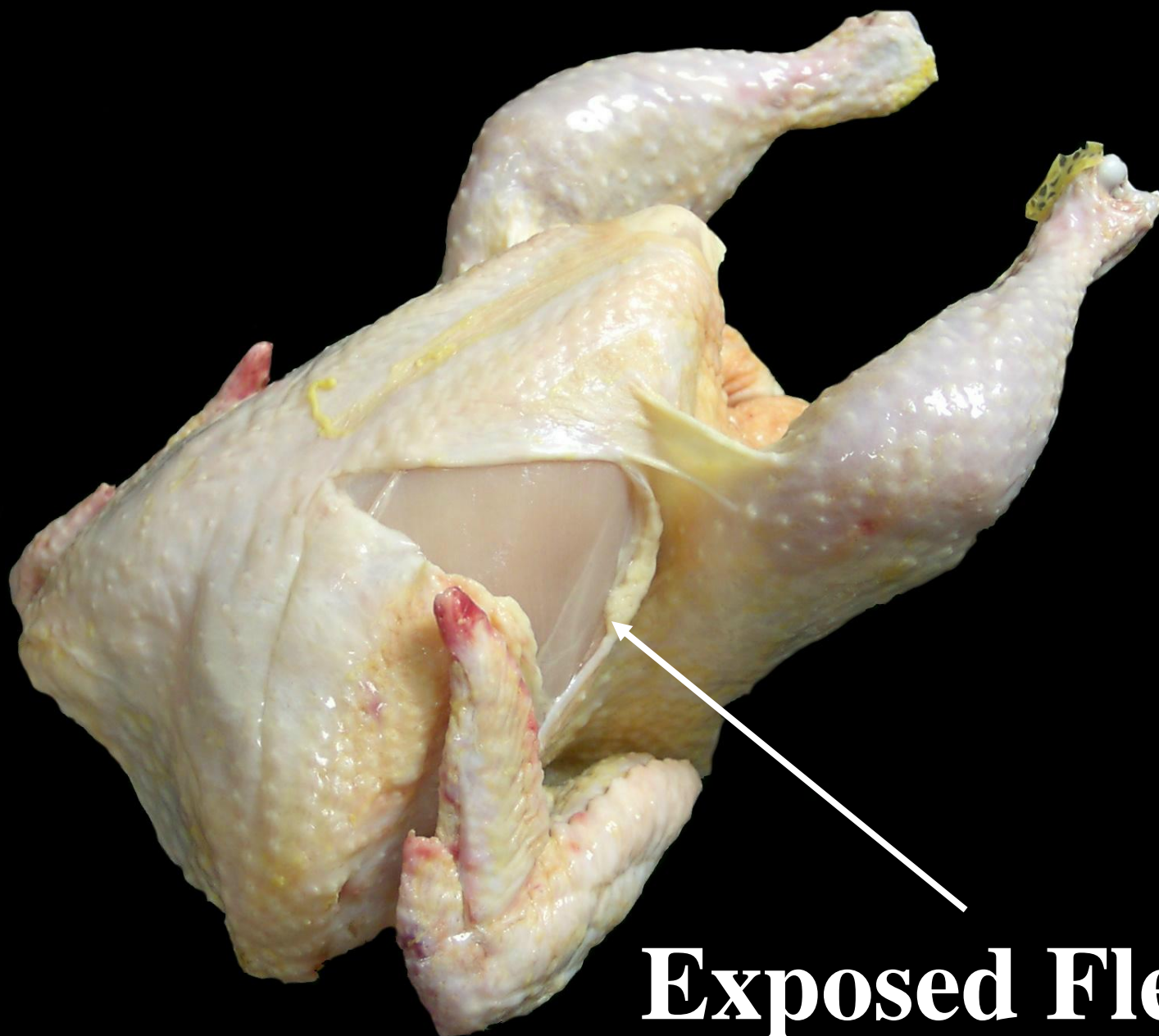


# Missing Parts

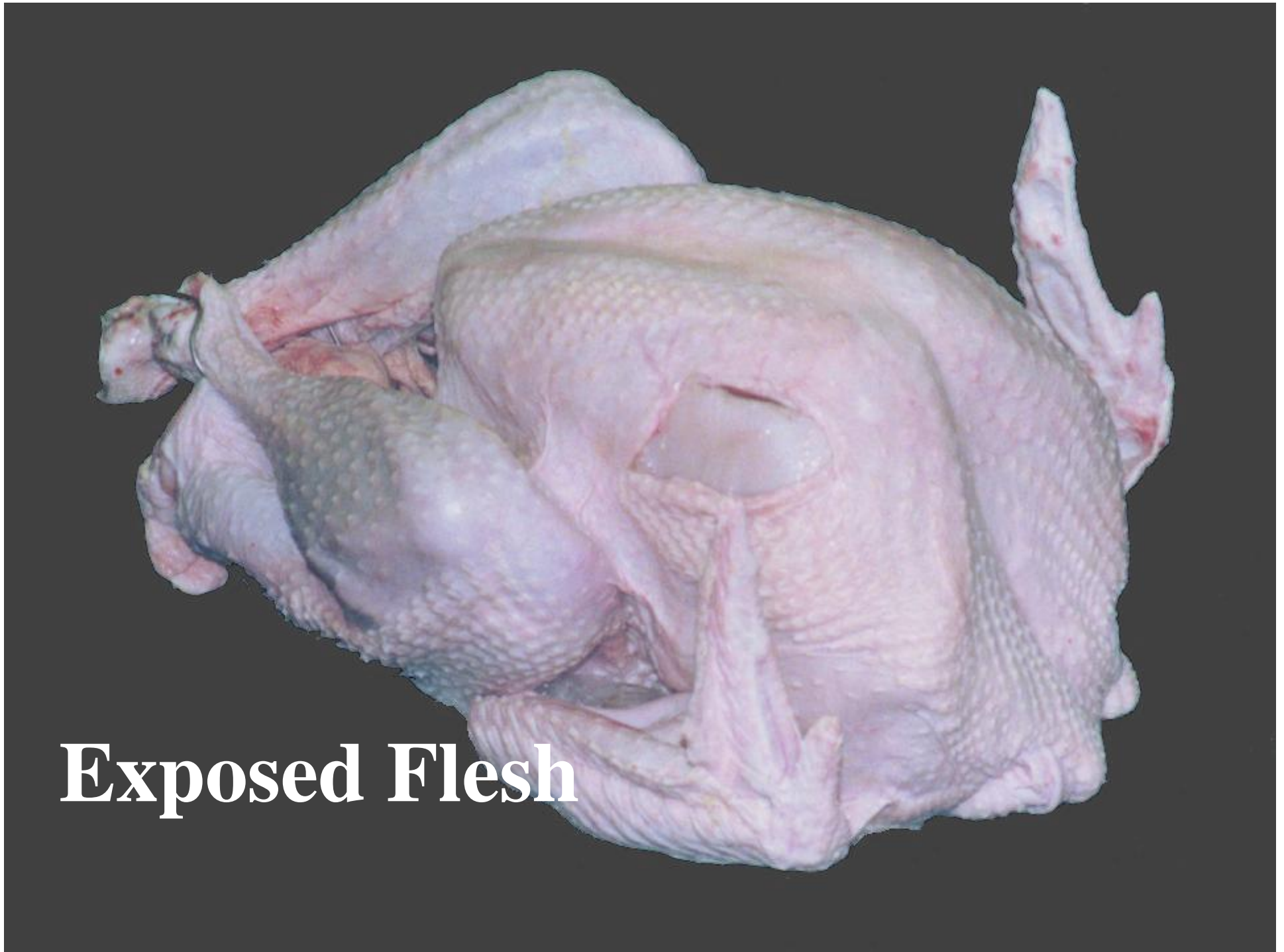




**Missing Parts**



**Exposed Flesh**



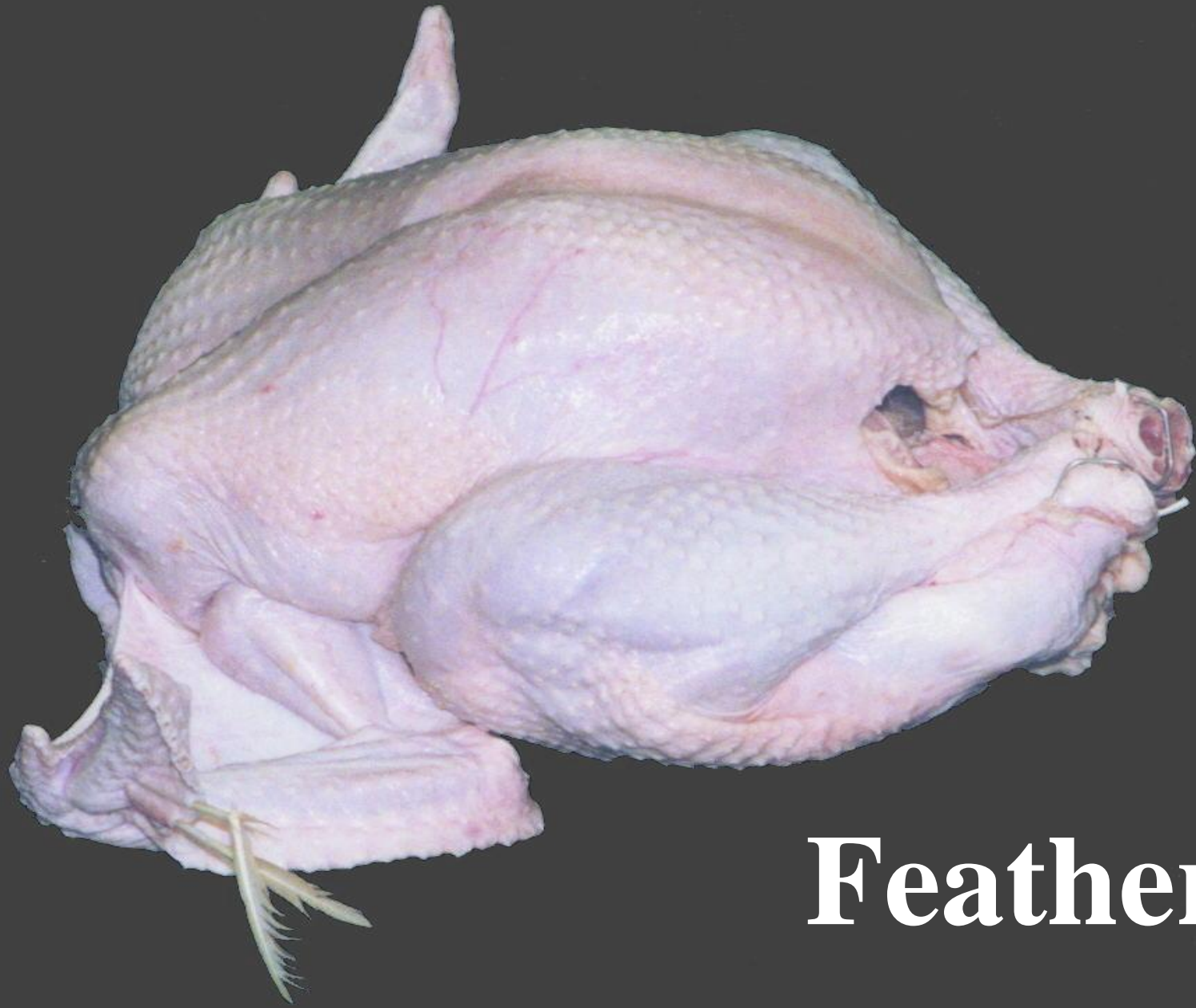
**Exposed Flesh**



# Feathers







**Feathers**



# Discolorations



# DISCOLORATIONS

- *Slight discolorations* are areas of discoloration that are generally pinkish in color and do not detract from the appearance of the carcass or part.
- *Lightly shaded discolorations* are generally reddish in color and are usually confined to areas of the skin or the surface of the flesh.
- *Moderately shaded discolorations* are areas that are generally dark red or bluish, or are areas of flesh bruising.











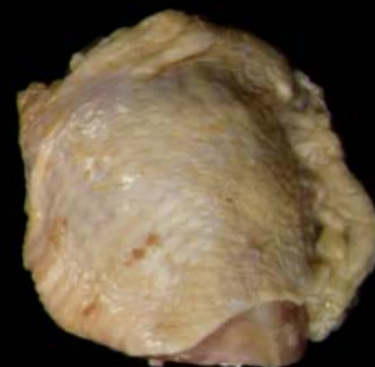
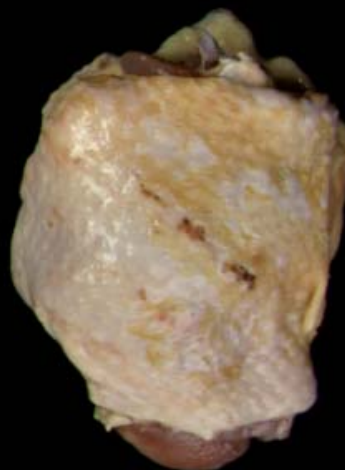


# RTC Factors

- Carcasses which do not meet the definition of ready-to-cook
- Scabs
- Gall contamination
- Decomposition
  - Slippery, slimy, greenish cast, mold, putrid odors
- Contamination



# Non-Grade Factors



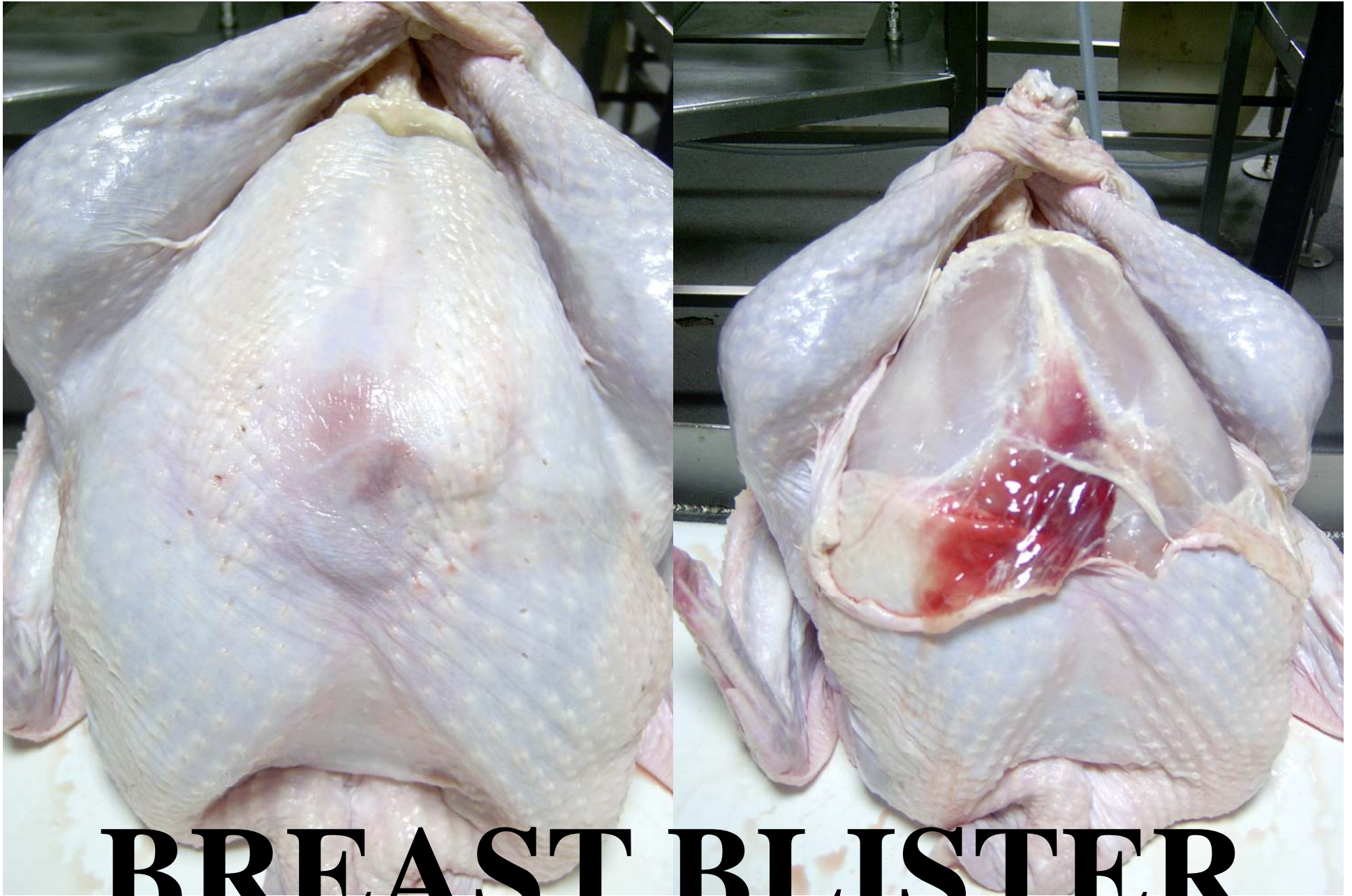


**GALL STAIN**



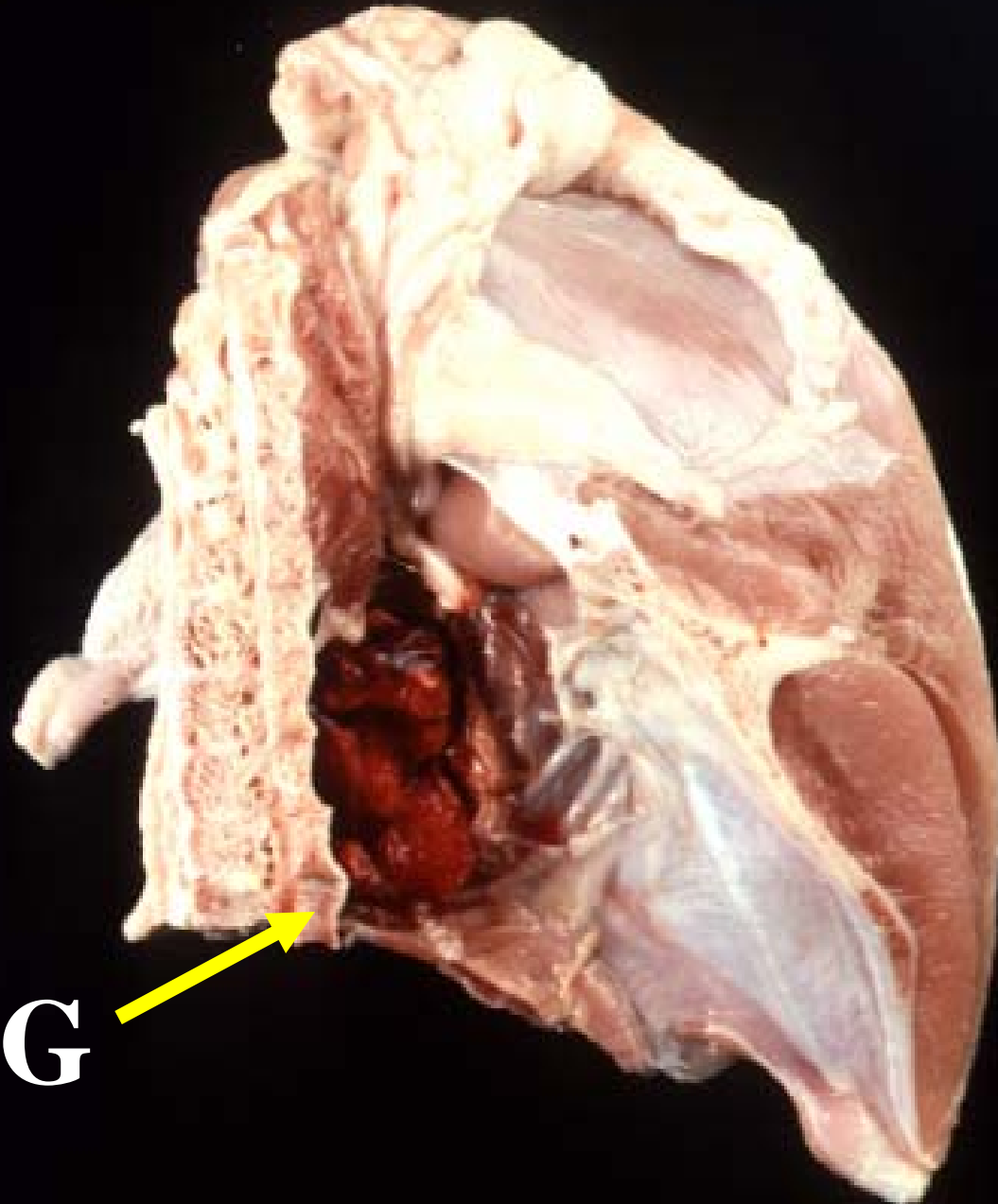
# SCABS





**BREAST BLISTER**

**LUNG**



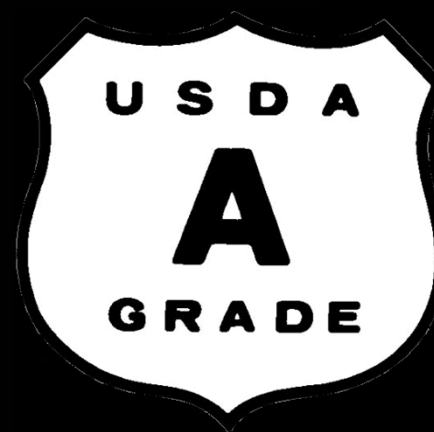
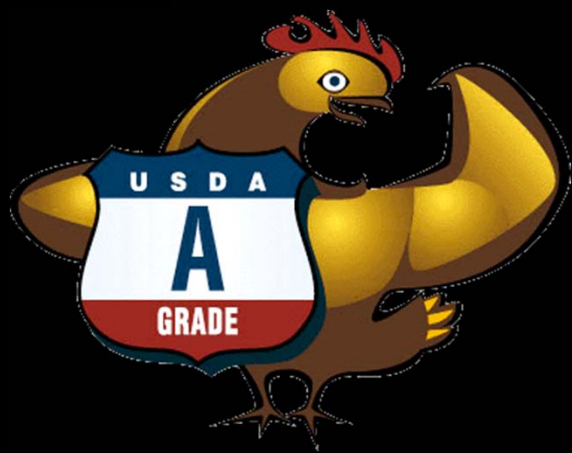


**WIND  
PIPE**



# OIL GLANDS

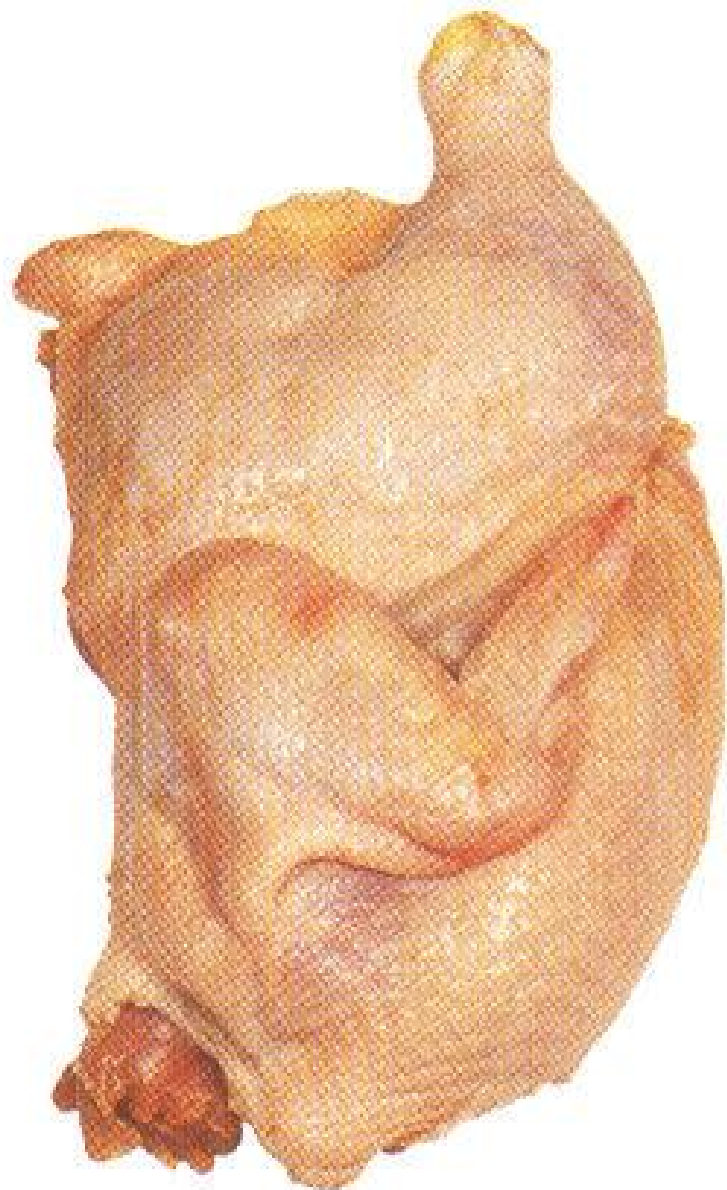




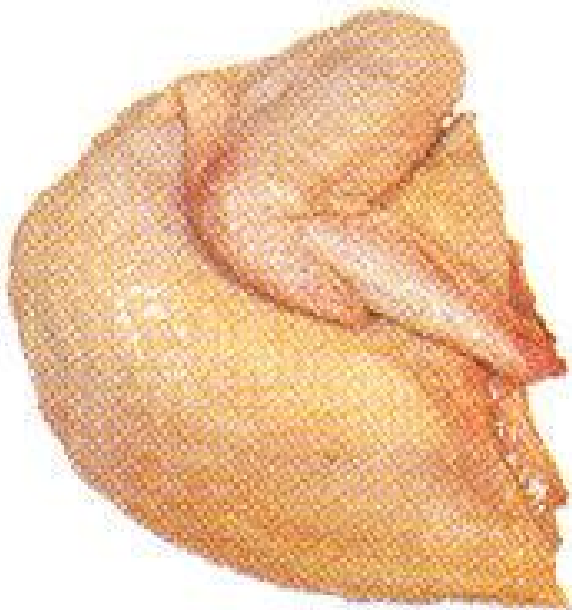


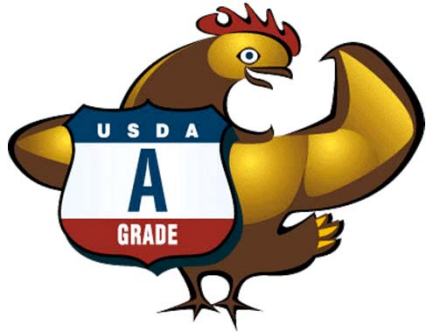
# MANNER OF CUT



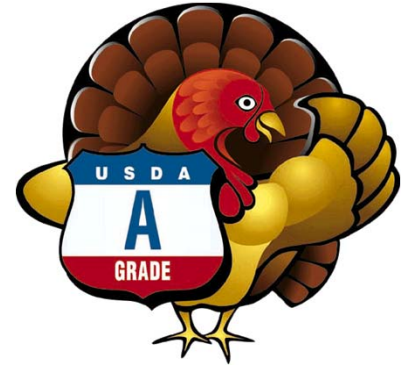


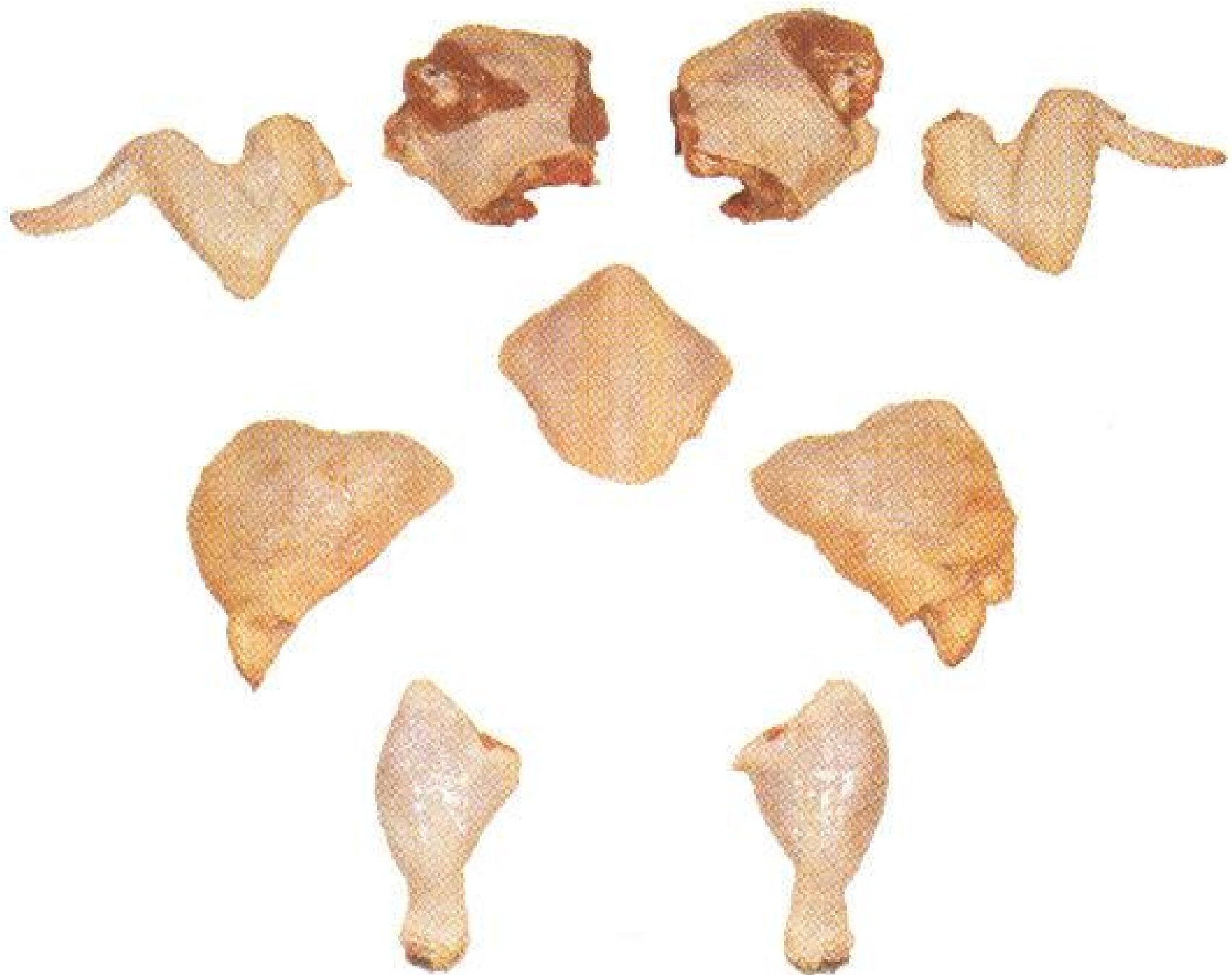




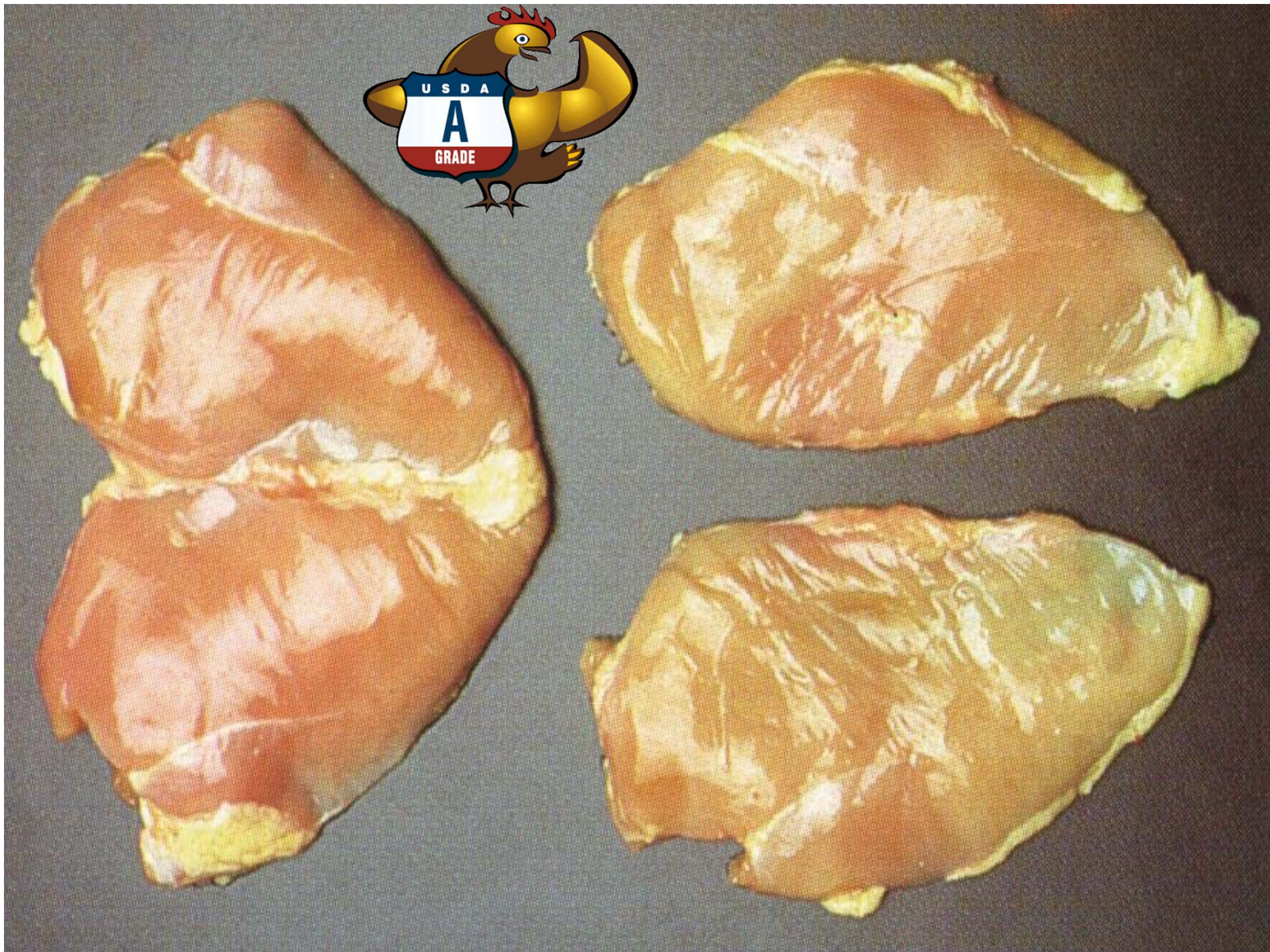
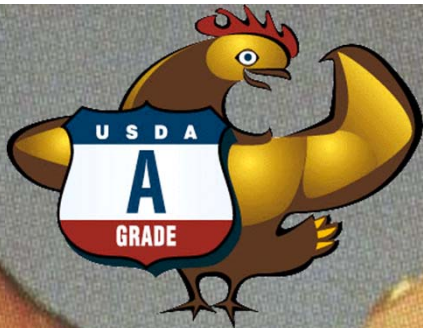


# USDA Grade A

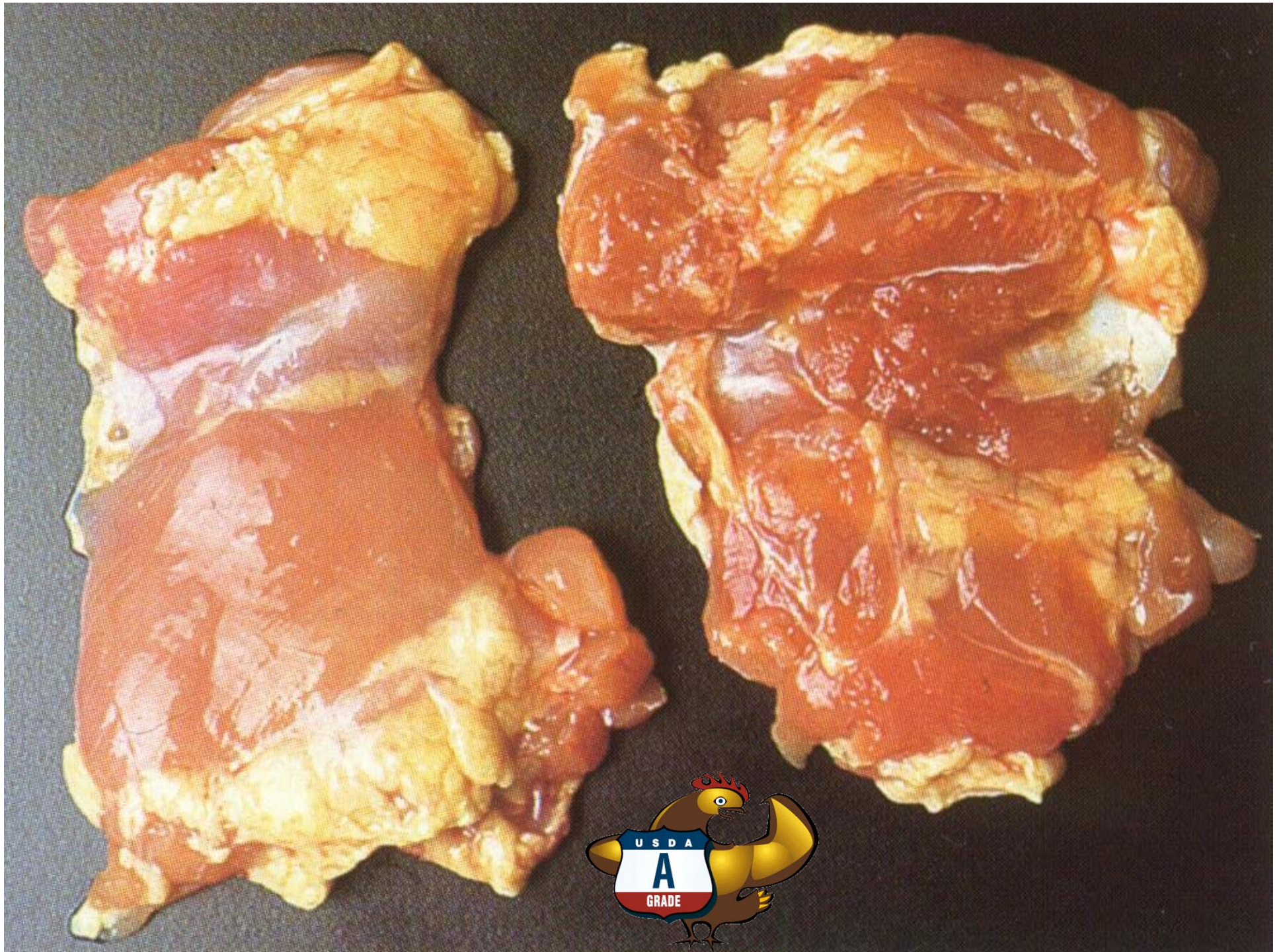




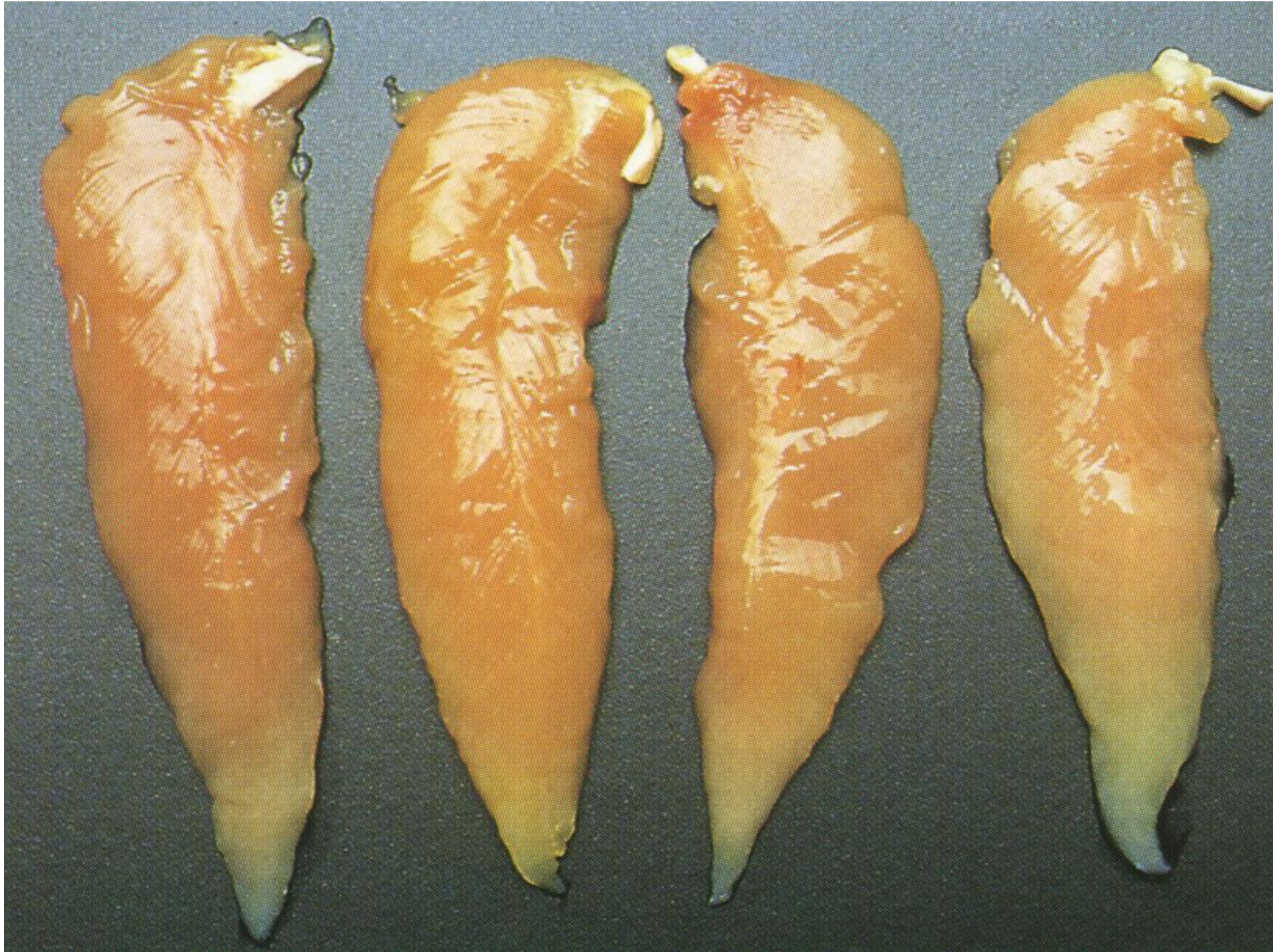














# Grading and Inspection

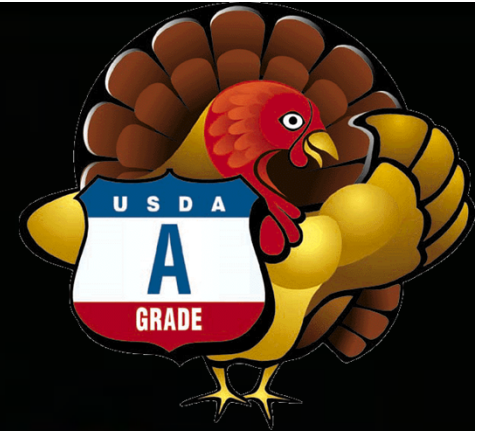
## What's the Difference?



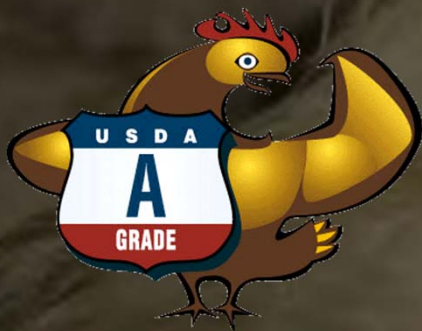
U.S. Grade A Poultry



U.S. Inspected Poultry



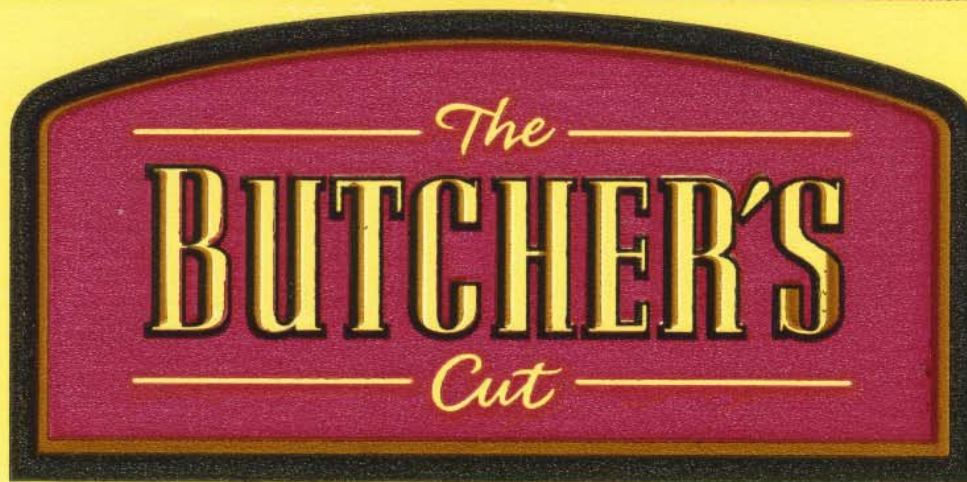
# Quality







**This symbol of assurance guarantees  
the product has been graded by the U.S.  
Department of Agriculture according to  
the official US quality standards**



# Split Breasts

## WITH RIBS

### YOUNG CHICKEN

MINIMALLY  
PROCESSED

KEEP  
REFRIGERATED

MAY CONTAIN UP  
TO FOUR PERCENT  
RETAINED WATER

#### SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS

THIS PRODUCT WAS PREPARED FROM INSPECTED AND PASSED MEAT AND/OR POULTRY. SOME FOOD PRODUCTS MAY CONTAIN BACTERIA THAT COULD CAUSE ILLNESS IF THE PRODUCT IS MISHANDLED OR COOKED IMPROPERLY. FOR YOUR PROTECTION, FOLLOW THESE SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS.



KEEP REFRIGERATED OR FROZEN.  
THAW IN REFRIGERATOR OR MICROWAVE.



COOK THOROUGHLY.

KEEP HOT FOODS HOT. REFRIGERATE LEFTOVERS IMMEDIATELY OR DISCARD.

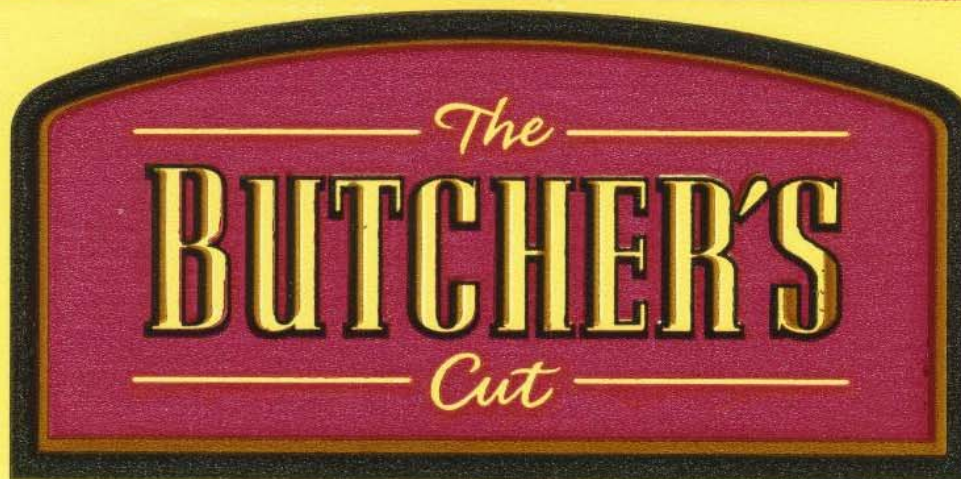


KEEP RAW MEAT AND POULTRY SEPARATE FROM OTHER  
FOODS WASH WORKING SURFACES (INCLUDING  
CUTTING BOARDS), UTENSILS, AND HANDS AFTER TOUCHING  
RAW MEAT OR POULTRY.



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# Thighs

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# Specifications for Poultry Products

**A unique way of ensuring you receive exactly what you order.**



# **List of items Frequently Incorporated Into Specifications**

- **Quality and quantity of raw materials including grade of poultry used, source, weight range, and condition of product.**
- **Product formulation, percentage of ingredients, specified requirements for blending, grinding, and forming.**
- **Batter breaded percentages and coverage including defects resulting from the batter/breading, cooking, and freezing process.**
- **Temperature verification of raw, cooked, and frozen products throughout the entire production process.**

# **List of items Frequently Incorporated Into Specifications**

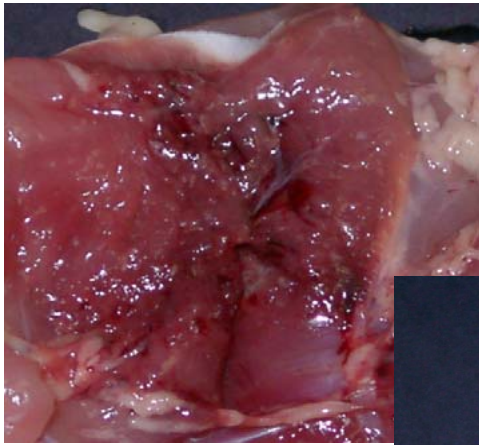
- **Metal detection including sensitivity levels and procedures for checking.**
- **Test weighing to verify the marked net weight of packaged product.**
- **Condition examination of product and packaging materials for defects.**

# **Specifications Are Submitted for Approval as Follows:**

- **Applicant submits the Application for Specifications Approval to the National Office for review.**
- **National Supervisor reviews and approves specification or advises applicant of the reason(s) for disapproval.**
- **Upon approval, a letter will be sent to the applicant advising them of the approval and their responsibilities.**
- **National Poultry Supervisor will distribute the approved specifications to grading branch personnel nationwide.**
- **Prior to actual production, USDA Grading Branch personnel will review the specification requirements with management at each applicable processing location.**



# Meat Defects



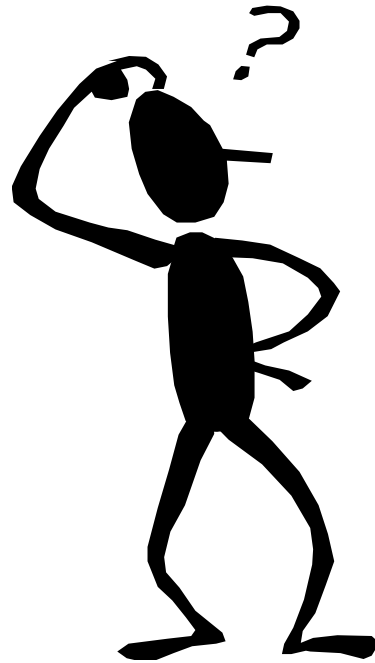
# Formulation

Nitrites

Sugars

Phosphates

Antioxidants



Accelerants

Binders

Spices

Nitrates

# *Batter Breading*





# METAL DETECTION



# METAL DETECTION

## Metal Contaminants

- ➔ **Ferrous** - Is magnetic and conductive (i.e. cast iron and steel).
- ➔ **Non-Ferrous** - Is non-magnetic but a excellent conductor so it is easily detected (i.e. brass, copper, zinc, bronze, aluminum).
- ➔ **Stainless Steel** - Poor conductor and non-magnetic.



# Packaging and Packing



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# Defect Criteria

**Packaging = Primary Containers: Bags, Casings**

- 1. Cuts**
- 2. Tears**
- 3. Holes**
- 4. Dirt**
- 5. Excess Moisture**
- 6. Smeared or stained area**
- 7. Improper closure affecting the usability of the container**

# Defect Criteria

## *Packing*

### Shipping Containers/Boxes

- Condition
- Labeling
- Marking

# **Another Pair of Eyes**



# Grading and Cutting Demo

