

Leadership in Agriculture  
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**Canada** 



**BRITISH COLUMBIA  
CHICKEN MARKETING BOARD**

**BC Hatching  
eggs**

**BC Chicken**

**COMB**

**BC COUNCIL OF MARKETING BOARDS**

- Chicken has always been a quick, easy, nutritious meal for Canadians and remains our Number 1 meat choice. It is low in calories, easy to digest and relatively inexpensive. It can be found in the supermarkets in a variety cuts, cooked or raw and fresh or frozen. With all of these options, it easy to understand why chicken has become a very popular weekday dinner.



- Over 100 years ago, a chicken was grown for egg and meat production. Today, there are three types of chicken being grown, one for eggs (layer), one for meat (broiler), and one for hatching eggs (broiler breeder). The BC Chicken Marketing Board regulates the production of Broiler Chickens.
- Broiler Breeders produce the eggs that are hatched into a broiler chicken. A broiler breeder barn will have roosters and hens for the eggs to be fertilized and then hatch. Each hen will lay up to 150 eggs in her lifetime. The eggs are collected at least two times a day, inspected, and then placed into trays with the large side up. These eggs are stored in a cooler at 15-21°C (59-70°F) until the hatchery truck comes to pick them up in temperature regulated trucks. This usually happens twice a week.



- Once the eggs arrive at the hatchery, the eggs are placed in an incubator. They will stay here for 18 days. The eggs are turned approximately once an hour to make sure the developing chick does not touch the shell. After 18 days, they will be moved into another room, called a hatcher. The eggs are not turned in this room and they will hatch into chicks in three days. All together, it takes 21 days to hatch a chicken egg.
- Most chicks are vaccinated at the hatchery. This is done either by injecting the vaccine into the shell of the egg when it is moved from the incubator to the hatcher, or by spraying the vaccine over the chicks just after they have hatched. Vaccinating protects the chicks against certain diseases.

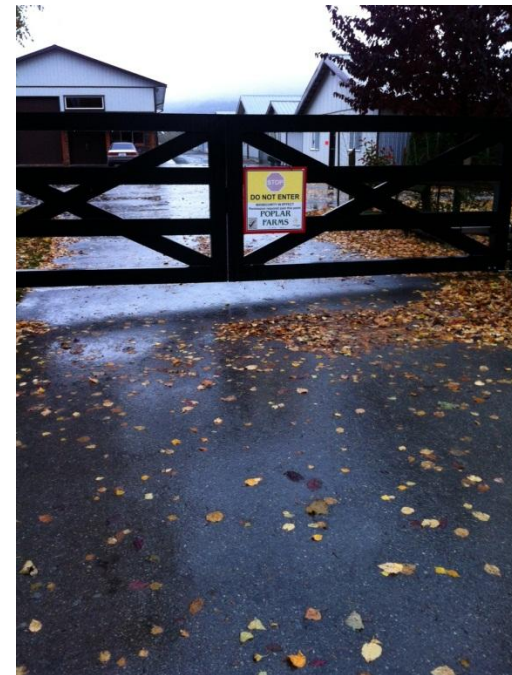
- After the chicks have hatched, they are sorted, counted and placed into crates for easy transport to the farm. The trucks used to transport the chicks are heated so that the chicks are comfortable throughout their journey.
- The chicks are then carried into the warm, clean barns full of fresh bedding and placed on the floor. There is plenty of feed and water close to the ground so the chicks can find and reach it with ease. The chicks will stay in the barn for 5 to 6 weeks until they are about 2 kgs. At this time, they will be loaded into crates and sent to the processing plant

- There are 53 registered Broiler Breeder Producers in BC today sending 103 million eggs annually to the hatchery.
- There are 331 registered Chicken Growers producing 32 million kgs of chicken every 8 weeks.

- **Biosecurity**

Poultry Producers follow strict biosecurity and food safety protocols that are designed to reduce the ability of viruses, bacteria and parasites to enter the barns and affect the flocks they care for.

Viruses, bacteria and parasites can be carried into the barns on equipment, clothing, footwear and hands. Diseases can be easily transferred from one poultry farm to the next just by the traffic that is on the farm everyday.



# Facts:

- All chicken grown in Canada is grain fed
- No hormones or steroids are fed to chicken
- Chickens have free access to feed and water
- Chicken farmers do not set retail or wholesale prices
- The Canadian chicken industry is responsible for 49,700 jobs
- The Canadian chicken industry contributes close to \$9.5 billion to the Canadian Economy
- The Canadian chicken industry is supply managed
- Most chicken farms in Canada are family owned and operated
- Chicken manure is a great fertilizer
- Canadian chicken barns are thoroughly cleaned between each flock
- Chicken is Canada's favorite meal
- Hormone and steroid use has been illegal in chicken production since the 1960s
- Chicks are vaccinated to prevent common diseases
- The average Canadian eats 30kgs of chicken a year



For More Information visit our websites:

[www.bcbhec.com](http://www.bcbhec.com)

[www.bcchicken.ca](http://www.bcchicken.ca)

