

# The Poultry Processing Line:

## An Overview of How Chickens Are Slaughtered and Processed in the U.S.

### 1 RECEIVING AND SLAUGHTER



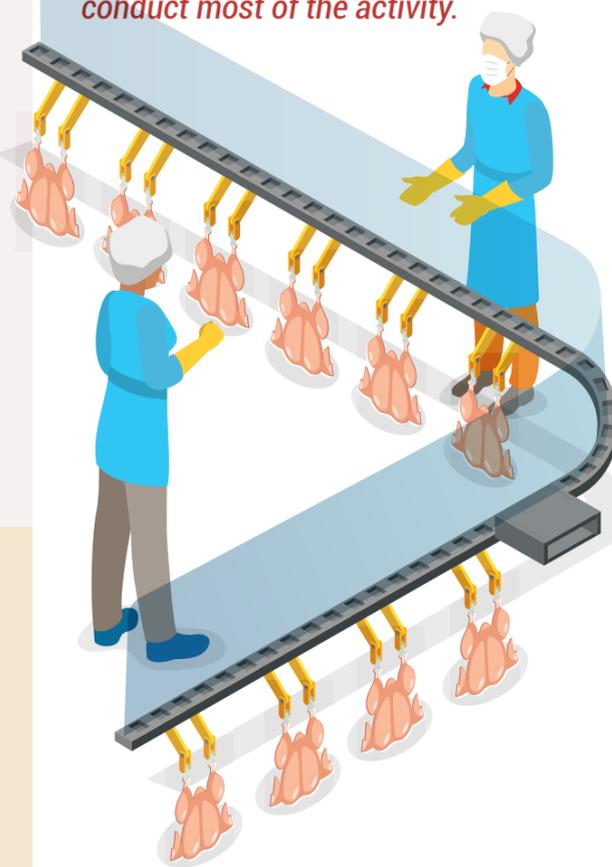
- Chickens arrive at the processing plant from the farm from where they are raised cage-free in large, ventilated barns called "growout houses"
- Workers trained in humane handling carefully place chickens on a moving line
- The chickens are calmed by dim lighting and by "rub bars," which provide a comforting sensation on the chicken's chest
- Birds are stunned (rendered unconscious and unaware of pain) and then slaughtered with a quick, single cut to the throat
- Trained workers ensure that each bird is properly slaughtered before feather removal, evisceration and cleaning

The poultry processing line includes trained workers , automated equipment , and inspection and testing conducted by the USDA and plant personnel .

 USDA inspectors are in every plant monitoring the processing line to ensure the chicken you eat is safe and meets U.S. Department of Agriculture safety standards.

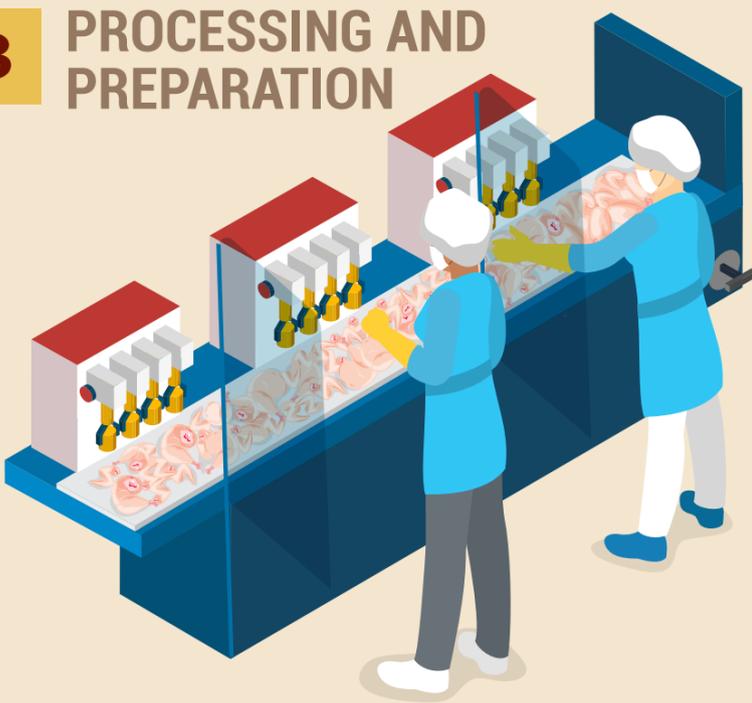
### 2 CLEANING AND EVISCERATION (REMOVAL OF FEATHERS AND INTERNAL ORGANS)

*This part of the processing line is highly automated. Machines conduct most of the activity.*



- Feathers, internal organs and feet are removed
- Carcasses are thoroughly washed
- Each carcass is inspected by a member of the processing plant and a USDA inspector for any food safety and quality issues
- Carcasses are then chilled to reduce any possible food borne pathogens
- The chicken is tested for any potential dangerous bacteria, like Salmonella

### 3 PROCESSING AND PREPARATION



- Chicken carcasses are cut and deboned to become different products like chicken wings, drumsticks or chicken breasts
- Chicken might also be cooked in the plant or sent to other plants to be made into products like chicken nuggets, patties or frozen meals

### 4 PACKAGING AND SHIPPING

- Once the chicken is cut up into parts, it is packaged, bagged and/or boxed
  - The chicken products cannot leave the plant without being inspected by USDA and getting the USDA seal of approval.
- Finally, the chicken is shipped in a refrigerated truck to grocery stores, restaurants or distribution centers.



For more information, visit [www.chickencheck.in/faq/how-chickens-slaughtered-processed/](http://www.chickencheck.in/faq/how-chickens-slaughtered-processed/)