



Texas Agricultural Extension Service

COST AND YIELD COMPARISONS OF READY-TO-COOK CHICKEN PRODUCTS

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Consumers of poultry meat products (individuals and food service operators) make purchasing decisions based on personal preferences, convenience of preparation and economy. Convenience of preparation is most important to many consumers because their busy schedules leave little time for cooking. Cost per serving (economy) is a primary concern of food service clientele. Marketing firms are responding by providing more pre-cut and boneless chicken products. As a rule, whole chicken costs less per pound than cut-up chicken parts or boneless meat products. However, parts or boneless products may be an equally good buy when preparation method, family preferences and cost per serving are considered. Consumers need information to assist in comparing product costs and yields.

Product Yield Comparison

Product yield comparisons may be made on the basis of either raw or cooked products using the information in Table 1. There are two options for comparing raw product yields. Total edible product yields (meat and skin) are presented in column 1. Comparisons based on meat only are presented in column 2. To determine the edible portion (meat and skin) in a whole breast, locate the corresponding number in column 1. One pound of whole breast (as purchased with bone) will yield 0.85 pounds of edible product (meat and skin). One pound of whole breast (as purchased with bone) will yield 0.68 pounds of meat (no bone and no skin). To compare yields of different chicken products, yield figures from the same column should be used. For example, to compare the "meat only yield" of whole chicken (58 percent) with the "meat only yield" of split breast (71 percent) use figures only from column 2.

Three options are presented for comparing cooked product yields. Comparisons based on fried yield (floured, but not battered) are presented in column 3. Comparisons based on roasted yield are presented in column 4. Stewed yield comparisons are given in column 5. The cooked yield figures in Table 1 represent the amount of cooked edible product from 1 pound of product as purchased. For example, 1 pound of raw whole chicken after frying (floured, but not battered) will yield 0.47 pounds of edible product (flour coating, meat and skin). However, 1 pound of breast fillet after frying will yield 0.73 pounds of edible product (flour coating and meat, no skin). The breast fillet has a higher yield because there is no bone and the only loss is due to cooking. As would be expected, moist cooking methods (stewing and frying) result in less product loss than roasting.

Table 1. YIELD OF 1 POUND OF PRODUCT AS PURCHASED

	Col. 1	Col. 2	Col. 3	Col. 4	Col. 5
	<u>RAW</u>			<u>COOKED</u>	
<u>CHICKEN PRODUCT</u>	<u>MEAT & SKIN</u>	<u>MEAT ONLY</u>	<u>FRIED</u>	<u>ROASTED</u>	<u>STEWED</u>
Whole	0.70	0.58	0.47	0.45	0.50
Whole Cut-up	0.70	0.58	0.47	0.45	0.50
Whole Boneless	1.00	0.82	0.68	0.65	0.72
Whole Breast	0.85	0.68	0.54	0.54	0.61
Split Breast	0.80	0.71	0.54	0.54	0.61
Boneless Breast	1.00	0.89	0.68	0.63	0.76
Breast Fillet	1.00	1.00	0.73	0.73	0.81
Breast Tenderloin	1.00	1.00	0.73	0.73	0.81
Thigh	0.79	0.66	0.52	0.52	0.57
Boneless Thigh	1.00	0.84	0.66	0.66	0.72
Drumstick	0.67	0.58	0.45	0.47	0.52
Wing	0.54	0.33	0.36	0.38	0.44

Product Cost Comparison

Table 2 compares the cost per pound of various edible products. Cost comparisons between any two products can be made on the basis of raw meat and skin or raw meat only, or on the basis of any of three cooking methods. In order to make cost per pound calculations, current prices for the product (from stores in your area) will be required in column 1. Calculate the cost per pound of product by dividing the current price per pound of product by the appropriate yield value from the table. For example, if the current price per pound of whole chicken is \$ 0.69 and the yield value of raw meat and skin is 0.70 then:

$$\text{Cost per pound} = \frac{\$0.69}{0.70} = \$ 0.99$$

The cost of 1 pound of edible product is \$ 0.99. Using the same price (\$ 0.69) and the fried yield, 1 pound of edible, fried, whole chicken would cost \$1.47.

$$\text{Cost per pound of edible portion} = \frac{\$0.69}{0.47} = \$ 1.47$$

It is important to remember that cost comparisons are most valid when comparing any number of raw products or when comparing any number of cooked products. Comparisons of raw product costs to cooked product costs are not generally valid because of normal yield losses occurring during cooking. However, product cost comparisons associated with different cooking methods (fried vs. stewed) are valid comparisons.

TABLE 2. COST AND YIELD COMPARISONS OF POULTRY MEAT PRODUCTS.

Chicken Product	RAW					COOKED					
	Col.1 Current price/lb. as purchased	Col.2 Meat & skin yield	Col.3 Cost/lb. meat & skin	Col.4 Meat only yield	Col.5 Cost/lb. meat only	Col.6 Fried yield	Col.7 Cost/lb. edible portion	Col.8 Roasted yield	Col.9 Cost/lb. edible portion	Col.10 Stewed yield	Col.11 Cost/lb. edible portion
Whole	0.70	0.70	0.58	0.58	0.47	0.45	0.50				
Whole cut-up	0.70	0.70	0.58	0.58	0.47	0.45	0.50				
Whole boneless	1.00	1.00	0.82	0.82	0.68	0.65	0.72				
Whole breast	0.85	0.85	0.68	0.68	0.54	0.54	0.61				
Split breast	0.80	0.80	0.71	0.71	0.54	0.54	0.61				
Boneless breast	1.00	1.00	0.89	0.89	0.68	0.63	0.76				
Breast fillet	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.73	0.73	0.81				
Breast tenderloin	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.73	0.73	0.81				
Thigh	0.79	0.79	0.66	0.66	0.52	0.52	0.57				
Boneless thigh	1.00	1.00	0.84	0.84	0.66	0.66	0.72				
Drumstick	0.67	0.67	0.58	0.58	0.45	0.47	0.52				
Wing	0.54	0.54	0.33	0.33	0.36	0.38	0.44				

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