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MEAT CUTTING AND PROCESSING FOR FOOD SERVICE

CONTENTS

Cutting and Processing Meats

Poultry Cuts

Poultry refers to the edible flesh, with adhering bones, of any bird that is commonly used as food. Types of poultry include chickens, ducks, geese, turkey, quail, pheasant. All poultry is processed in a similar manner. It is either cooked whole or segmented in a number of ways depending on how it is to be used.

All segments of small, young poultry can be prepared using dry heat cooking methods. Older birds, once they stop laying eggs, are butchered and marketed as stewing hens or boiling fowl. These birds need moist heat preparation and are ideal for pot pies, stews, and soups. All poultry should be fully cooked to at least 74°C (165°F) to eliminate the presence of salmonella.

wing meats, while the hindquarter contains the legs. It is common to further break the poultry into segments.

For maximum yield and precise processing, poultry can be segmented by cutting through the soft natural joints of the bird. The term *8-cut chicken* is used to describe a chicken segmented into two drumsticks, two thighs, and both breasts split in half across the rib bone (one half may contain the wing). This procedure is always done with the bone in. These segments can be processed further to boneless skinless cuts if desired. Figure 29 shows a fully segmented frying chicken, and Table 37 lists the common chicken cuts.



Figure 29. Segmented frying chicken.

Cut	Retail Cuts	Restaurant Cuts
Chicken breast	Chicken breastbone in	Suprême (chicken breast with wing drumette attached)
Chicken breast boneless/skinless		
Chicken breast fillets (or tenders)		
Chicken leg	Chicken leg (back attached)	Chicken Ballotine (boneless leg)
Chicken drumstick		
Chicken thigh (bone in)		
Chicken thigh (boneless skinless)		
Chicken wing	Chicken wing (whole)	Chicken wings split, tips removed
Chicken winglette (or wingette)		
Chicken wing drumette		
Chicken wing tip		
Backs and Necks	Chicken backs and necks	Chicken ribs, backs and necks are used for stock

Table 37- Common chicken cuts

White Meat Cuts

White or light meat comes from the breast and wings. The breast and wings are generally separated, but a chicken breast with the drumette portion of the wing still attached is called a **suprême**. Wings can be broken down into three parts: wing tip, winglette, and wing drumette (Figure 30).



Figure 30. Segmented chicken wing.

The breast can also be broken down further and the tenderloins (fillets) removed. The portion without the tenderloin can be split and pounded into a thin cutlet known as a paillard. Figure 31 shows the chicken breast whole and with the fillets removed from the bottom portion.

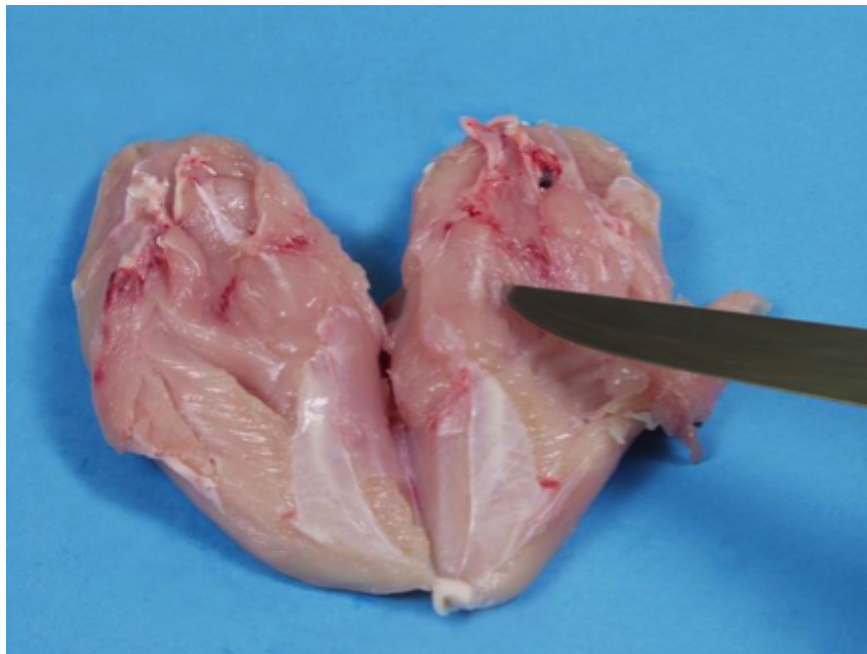


Figure 31a. Chicken breast whole



Figure 31b. Boneless skinless chicken breast with fillets removed.

Dark Meat Cuts

The dark meat of poultry comes from the legs, which can be broken down into two parts: the thigh and the drumstick. In restaurants, you may occasionally find a boneless leg that has been stuffed, which is called a **ballotine**.

Chicken legs are split at the knee joint to separate the thigh from the drumstick. Drumsticks are usually cooked bone in, while thighs can be deboned and skinned to use in a variety of dishes, including slicing or dicing for stir-frys and similar dishes.

Figure 32 shows a whole chicken leg broken down into a drumstick and boneless thigh.



Figure 32a. A whole chicken leg



Figure 32b. A drumstick



Figure 32c. Chicken thigh with skin and bone

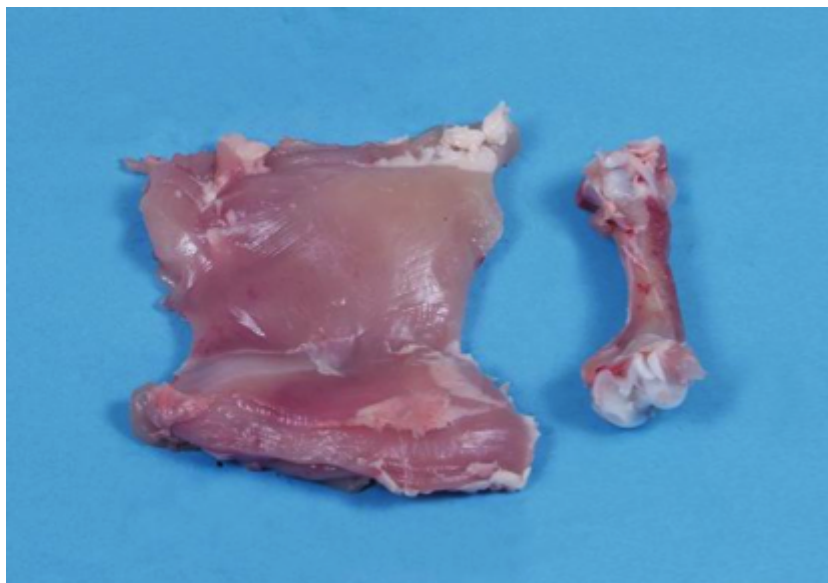


Figure 32d. skinless, boneless chicken thigh