

Poultry

In Wisconsin

- The average hen laid **289 eggs** per year in 2017.
- There were **8.5 million chickens** in Wisconsin in 2017 (excluding commercial broilers).
- Wisconsin hens lay an average of **125-172 million eggs** per month.

Poultry Fast Facts

- **Chicken eggs** are a good source of **lutein** which promotes eye health in humans.
- A hen **turns her eggs** approximately **50 times per day** to keep the embryo from sticking to the side of the shell.
- The **shell of an egg** is strong and can **support up to 9 pounds** without breaking with the pointed end up.
- A hen can **lay her first eggs at 5 months** of age.
- The **color** of a chicken egg is determined by the **breed of chicken** and in some cases can be the same color as their earlobes.

Turkey Fast Facts

- A group of turkeys is called a **rafter**.
- The red fleshy appendage that hangs from a turkey's neck is called a **snood**.
- The **male** turkey is known as a **tom**. The **female** is called a **hen**.
- Only **tom** turkeys **gobble**. **Hens** make a **clucking sound**.
- The dark of dark meat comes from a chemical compound called **myoglobin**, which plays a key role in **oxygen transport**. Dark meat is found in muscles that are used frequently, such as the legs.

Turkey Background

- The birds we know as turkeys are native to Mexico and the eastern U.S. They were **first domesticated by the Aztecs in Mexico**. Early European explorers called them **'turkey' after the country in Asia**. Since turkeys looked similar to peacocks brought by explorers to Europe from Asia, they assumed that's what they were. At that time, anything from the exotic East was given the name 'turkey.'

Poultry Vocabulary

Breed: group of animals that share many of the same physical features; in chickens it can be combs, skin colors, feather colors and patterns

Brood: a group of newly-hatched chicks

Chick: a young chicken, newly hatched

Hen: an adult female chicken of breeding age

Incubation: process of warming the chick eggs before they hatch for about three weeks

Poultry: domesticated fowl such as chickens, turkeys, ducks and geese

Rooster: an adult male chicken of breeding age

