

NEWS RELEASE



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NOT CONVINCED BY THE WEEK OF PROGRAMMES? HERE'S MORE REASONS TO GO FREE-RANGE

As the week's programmes draw to an end, Compassion in World Farming reveals two more reasons to go free-range; free-range chicken has less fat and is only 27p more per serving.

Healthy birds, healthy people

Research shows that free-range chickens are significantly less fatty than chickens reared in intensive factory farms. Treating chickens with compassion by allowing them the freedom to roam, not only benefits the chickens, but it may help fight Britain's obesity crisis.

- **Free-ranging behaviour has been shown to reduce fat by up to 65% in chickens**
- **Organic chickens can contain 25% less fat than intensively reared chickens (standard chicken)**
- **That's 17.1g per 100g of fat for organic chicken, compared with 22.8g for intensive**

Scientists say that free-range chickens offer a more beneficial fatty acid composition and more iron compared to indoor raised chickens. This is partially due to free-range chickens being slower-growing breeds, but also because they have room to exercise and spread their wings.

Make the most of your chicken and upgrade to free-range for 27p

- **The good news-** you can upgrade to free-range for as little as 27p per serving by making the most out of your chicken.
- **The even better news-** if supermarkets priced free-range chicken relative to production costs, you could upgrade to free-range for as little as 15p per serving.

"Go free-range, it's the obvious choice and it doesn't cost much more." Richard Brooks, Compassion in World Farming.

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Notes:

- Chickens labelled 'free-range' or 'organic' are allowed access to outdoors and more space to roam around. They are also slower-growing breeds which reduces the potential for lameness and suffering.
- Research suggests traditionally reared chickens used to be active and eat vegetation and seeds, whereas modern intensively reared chickens are fed on high energy foods and are very inactive; Professor Michael Crawford of the Institute of Brain Chemistry and Human Nutrition at London Metropolitan University, which carried out the research, concluded that these changes in the intensive chicken's diet and rearing system may be contributing to rising levels of obesity in people.
- A typical supermarket chicken today contains proportionally 2.7 times as much fat as in 1970
- A typical supermarket chicken today contains around 30% less protein than in 1970; intensively reared chicken now contains nearly 40% more fat than protein
- A 100g portion of chicken today contains around 100 more calories than it would have done in 1970 - this means that a serving of chicken may contain around 50% more calories today than it did in 1970

Omega-3 fatty acids are important for healthy brain function and prevention of heart disease; there is concern that the Omega-3 content of modern diets is often too low relative to the Omega-6 content

- The amount of the Omega-3 fatty acid, DHA, in a typical supermarket chicken decreased by 85% between 1980 and 2004.
- Over the same period the amount of the Omega-6 fatty acid, linoleic acid, increased by 2.6 times (2400mg per 100g in 1970 compared with 6290mg today).

Organic chicken contains higher levels of polyunsaturated fatty acids, including 38% more Omega-3 than non-organic chicken.

Iron

The meat of slower-growing breeds has been found to contain more iron than that of a fast-growing strain.

Figures on saving money

The table below shows the extra cost of eating free-range whole chicken, assuming that there are approximately three servings per kg whole chicken (0.33kg per serving).

	Extra cost per serving
Production cost	25p
Asda	24p
Asda* (offer)	35p
Sainsbury's	57p

Tesco	43p
Average of Asda (offer), Sainsbury's and Tesco	45p

- So, if supermarkets charged no more extra for free-range chicken than the additional cost of producing it, you could change to free-range for around 25p per serving.
- At current retail prices you can change to free-range for around 45p per serving.

Take Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall's advice and make an even bigger saving

For families on a tight budget, you can create two meals for the family from one bird (e.g. a roast dinner and a second meal such as risotto, curry or soup from the leftovers as on Hugh's shows).

If we assume a medium-sized 1.6kg whole bird will feed a family four (two adults and two children) for two meals (0.2kg per serving):

	Extra cost per serving
Production cost	15p
Asda	14p
Asda (offer)	21p
Sainsbury's	34p
Tesco	26p
Average of Asda (offer), Sainsbury's and Tesco	27p

- So, if supermarkets charged no more extra for free-range than the additional cost of producing it, you could change to free-range for around 15p per serving
- At current retail prices you can change to free-range for around 27p per serving if you make the most of your chicken.
- If we assume that a family eats two meals with chicken per week, and if supermarkets charged no more extra for free-range than the additional cost of producing it, changing to free-range would only add around £1.20 to the weekly shopping bill for a family of four.
- At current retail prices, changing to free-range would only add around £2.16 to the weekly shopping bill for a family of four if you make the most of your chicken.