

NATIONAL 4-H POULTRY JUDGING MANUAL
Revised December 2020
MARKET POULTRY
GRADING READY-TO-COOK POULTRY PARTS

Parts that can be used for grading include:

1. Breast Quarter
2. Breast Quarter without Wing
3. Leg Quarter
4. Whole Leg
5. Thigh
6. Thigh with Back
7. Drumstick
8. Whole Wing
9. Wing Drumette
10. Wing Flat

Ready-to-cook poultry parts are graded with a slightly different set of standards (see Table 1). Parts for any weight category can be used (broiler, heavy broiler, and turkey). To make parts grading standards more uniform and less confusing, we are only allowing the following parts to be used in the RTC parts grading class in 4-H.

Table 1. Summary of USDA specifications for standards for quality for individual ready-to-cook parts.

FACTOR	A Quality	B Quality	C Quality	No Grade
All Parts* 2-6 lb. 6-16 lb. > 16 lb.	¼ inch ½ inch ½ inch	⅓ of the flesh on each part	A moderate amount of meat may be trimmed around the edge of a part to remove defects	Appreciable amount of flesh removed from any part in which the normal meat yield is materially affected (⅛ inch deep and size of a quarter coin or larger)
Disjointed and broken bones	Thighs with back, legs, leg quarters may have femur disjointed from hip joint	Wings may be disjointed	No limit	
* For all parts, trimming of skin along the edge is allowed, provided that at least 75% of the normal skin cover associated with the part remains attached, and the remaining skin uniformly covers the outer surface and does not distract from the appearance of the part.				

PARTS: EXPOSED FLESH

For all parts, trimming of skin along the edge is allowed, provided at least 75 percent of the normal skin cover associated with the part remains attached, and the remaining skin uniformly covers the outer surface and does not detract from the appearance of the part.

The amount of exposed flesh allowed on a Grade A poultry part depends on the weight category. For broilers, only allowed a ¼ inch cut in the skin is allowed for a carcass to stay a Grade A (see Figure 1). For the higher weight categories, the limit is ½ inch.

Grade B parts are graded the same for skin trim or removal as whole carcasses with up to 1/3 of the flesh on the entire part exposed (see Figure 2), and the Grade C carcass has more than 1/3 of the flesh showing on a given part (see Figure 3). A moderate amount of meat may be trimmed around the edge of a part to remove defects without affecting the grade. **However, if an appreciable amount of flesh is removed from any part in which the normal meat yield is materially affected, the part should be graded as a NO GRADE.**

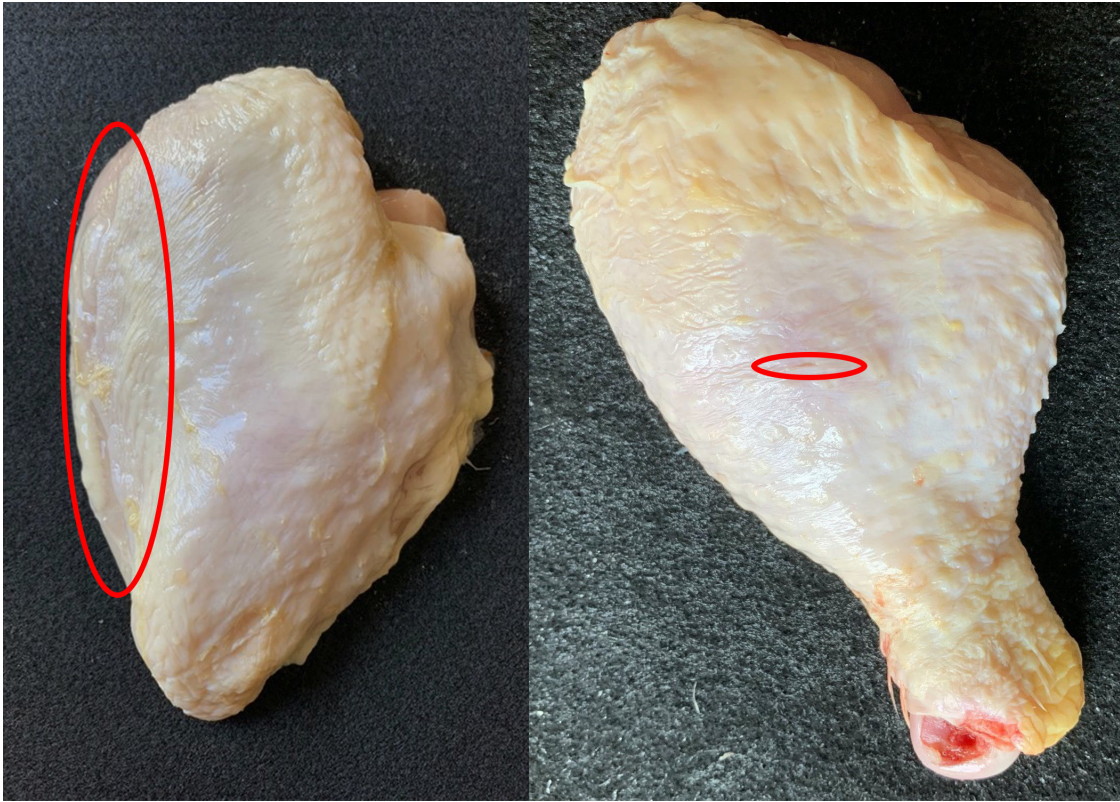


Figure 1. Grade A parts (breast quarter without wing and drumstick) with exposed flesh less than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch
Photo credit: Dr. Casey Ritz, University of Georgia.



Figure 2. Grade B parts (breast quarter without wing on the left and drumstick on the right)
because of excessive skin trim along the edges (more than $\frac{1}{4}$ inch but less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the part)
Photo credit: Dr. Casey Ritz, University of Georgia.

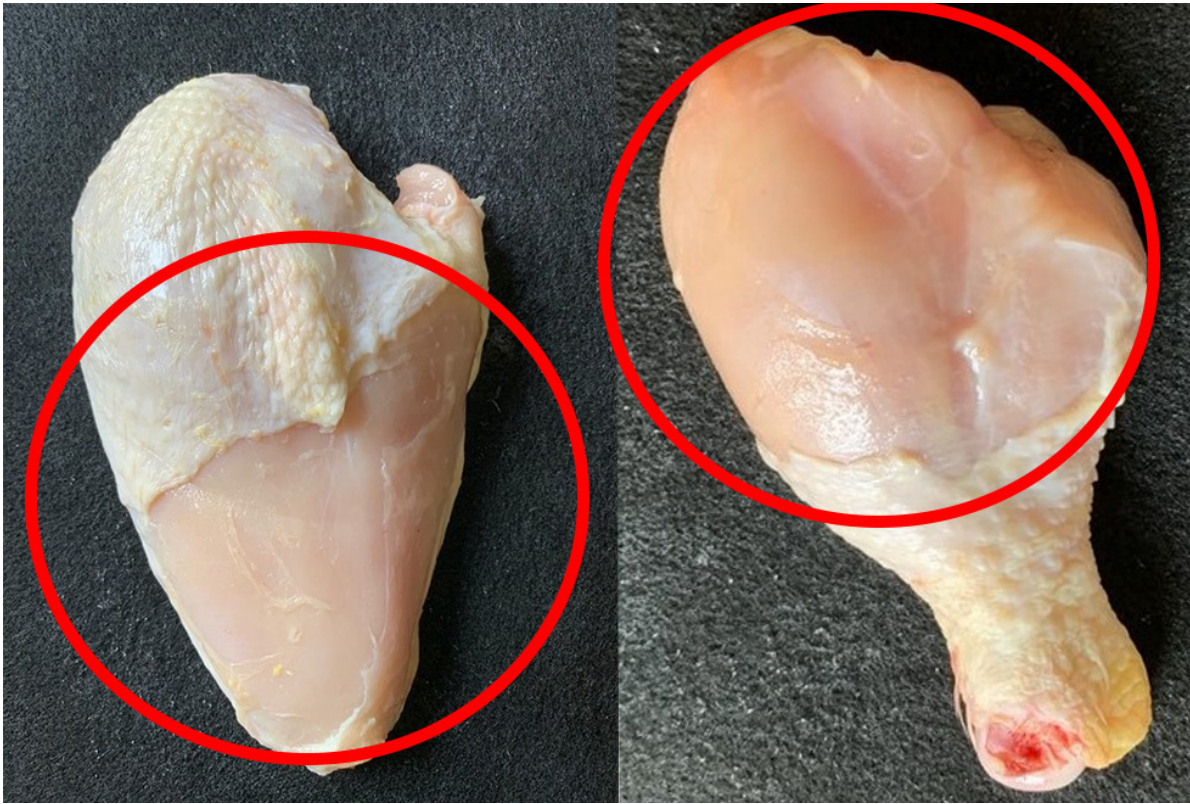


Figure 3. Grade C parts (breast quarter without wing on the left and drumstick on the right) with greater than $\frac{1}{3}$ of the flesh missing
 Photo credit: Dr. Casey Ritz, University of Georgia.

PARTS: DISJOINTED BONES

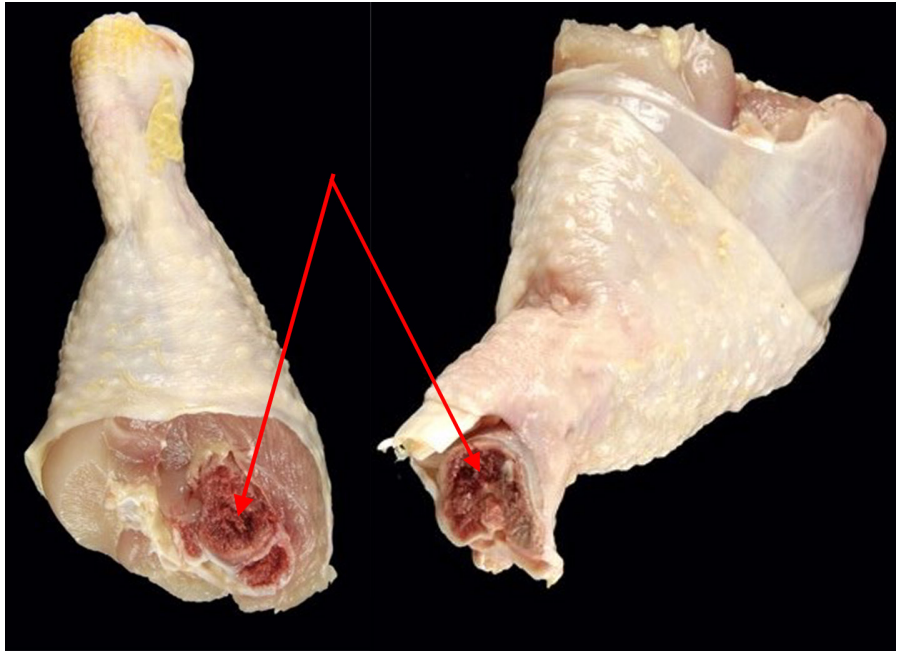
Thighs with back, whole legs, leg quarters, and whole wings are the only parts for possible disjoints. Grade A leg quarters may have the femur disjointed from the hip socket. Whole wings are not allowed to have a disjoint and remain a Grade A. Any disjointed whole wings are automatically Grade B (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. Grade A (left photo) and Grade B (right photo) wings based on the presence of a disjoint
 Photo credit: Dr. Casey Ritz, University of Georgia.

PARTS: DISJOINTED BONES

NO broken bones are allowed for Grade A or Grade B Parts. Any parts with a broken or cut bone are automatically assigned a Grade C. Figure 5 shows examples of miscuts on drumsticks that make them a Grade C.



*Figure 5. Grade C drumsticks based on cuts into the bone
Photo credit: Dr. Casey Ritz, University of Georgia.*