



Canadian study exposes drug-resistant bacteria in supermarket chicken

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Chicken bought at major supermarkets across Canada is frequently contaminated with superbugs an investigation by CBC TV's Marketplace has found.

Marketplace researchers wanted to test grocery store chicken for harmful, drug-resistant bacteria and bought 100 samples of poultry from supermarket chains in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. The samples included some of the “most familiar names in the poultry business,” says CBC News.

Lab analysis of the chicken found that two-thirds, or 67%, had bacteria. But the surprise wasn't just the *E. coli*, salmonella and campylobacter bacteria found in the chicken. Rather it was that all of the bacteria was resistant to at least one antibiotic.

Antibiotic resistance

Even more frightening, the researchers found some of the bacteria had resistance to “six, seven, or even eight different types of antibiotics.”

In interviews with Marketplace doctors and scientists said that the problem could be the result of chicken farmers giving too many antibiotics to their chickens, to make them stay healthy and speed up the growth process.

A representative of the Chicken Farmers of Canada, however, told Marketplace that there's “judicious use” of the antibiotics by chicken farmers. It's not easy to judge, however, since the Canadian government doesn't track how many antibiotics farmers give to their chickens.