

# Maryland chemophobes cluck-cluck over arsenic

*By ACSH Staff — November 12, 2010*

Advocacy group Food & Water Watch argues that [consumers need more food labeling](#) [1] so they can know what poisonous ingredients may be in their food — specifically, their chicken. On Tuesday, advocates in Maryland rallied against the use of chicken feed and medicines containing arsenic, which the poultry industry defends as a safe and effective means of stimulating growth, promoting chicken health, and producing the pinker meat consumers prefer. Speakers at the rallies argued that chicken should be labeled as containing arsenic because it is a heavy metal that can “become carcinogenic.” Maryland legislation to ban arsenic from chicken feed, Senate Bill 859, has been tabled but will be reintroduced early next year.

ACSH's Dr. Gilbert Ross counters that low levels of arsenic do not pose a health risk. “Yes, it is a real human carcinogen, unlike many of the other ‘toxic’ chemicals given media hype, but certainly not at the minuscule levels found in chicken. It has been shown that **high levels** in water can contribute to skin and lung cancer.”

Arsenic is one of the naturally-occurring substances found in potatoes and shrimp, as documented in our [ACSH Holiday Dinner Menu](#) [2].

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**Links**

[1] <http://ht.ly/38kFu>

[2] [http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubID.103/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.acsh.org/publications/pubID.103/pub_detail.asp)