FOOD and clothing are two basic human needs. In this E-unit, explore the many ways animals help provide people with food to eat and clothing to wear.

**Objective:**
Identify the ways animals provide food and clothing for people.

**Key Terms:**
- by-product
- caviar
- dairy cattle
- dual-purpose animal
- game
- hide
- leather
- meat animal
- mohair
- wool

**Food Sources from Animals**

Animals provide many foods people enjoy. Meat, milk, and eggs are examples of foods derived from animal sources. Some animals can provide more than just one food product. For example, a chicken produces not only meat but also eggs for human consumption. An animal that can produce two food products is often called a **dual-purpose animal**.

Animal products from important livestock sources, such as beef, sheep, swine, and poultry, are good sources of nutrients for humans. About 80 percent of the world obtains most of its protein, fats, and iron, as well as a variety of its vitamins, from meat. Without this quality nutrition, people might lack proper nutrients and not reach their full growth potential.

Meat can come from animals raised on farms, or it can come from wild animals. A **meat animal** is an animal raised especially for meat. Animals raised for meat include cattle, certain fish, turkeys, chickens, swine, and sheep. In some countries, horses might be added to this list but not in the United States. Wild animals used for meat include deer, rabbits, quail, and many
species of fish. These animals are not considered livestock because they are not raised domestically; instead, they are called game.

**Game** is wildlife hunted for food and other uses.

Besides meat, animals are sources of other foods for humans. Milk is one of nature’s most nutritious foods. Humans consume milk from several species of animals, such as cattle, goats, and sheep. Cattle specifically grown for the production of milk are identified as **dairy cattle**. Eggs are another important source of food and primarily come from chickens. However, guineas, ducks, and even fish provide eggs for human consumption. Some fish eggs are called **caviar**.

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**ON THE JOB…**

**CAREER CONNECTION:**

**The Meat Industry**

Producers could not market animals without other individuals who work in the meat industry. Careers in the meat industry demand early hours and a high level of skill. Many professionals in this industry find success following training in a university degree program in meat science, whereas others begin their careers as apprentices. Butchers can earn salaries of $25,000 to $35,000, and meat industry professionals, such as meat inspectors, can earn salaries of $40,000 to $50,000.

Butchers and meat processors must be able to identify meat from a variety of species and be familiar with the carcass areas and traits. They must also identify a variety of retail cuts from each primal-cut carcass region. In addition, meat professionals want ultimately to sell the best-quality product with high safety assurances. These professionals measure the way animals will yield the most meat cuts as well as maintain the highest level of quality, such as tenderness, juiciness, and flavor.

**Meat inspectors carefully examine carcasses to maximize food safety and prevent contamination in the final products. (Courtesy, Agricultural Research Service, USDA)**
Animal Sources for Clothing

With the increased use of synthetic fibers, the use of animal sources of clothing has slightly decreased. Yet, demand for many fibers, such as wool, has remained constant in the United States for several years.

The main sources of clothing from animals are fibers and skins. Sometimes these are by-products of meat animals. A by-product is a secondary product. Often, however, animals are raised specifically for products from which to make clothing. For example, mink are commonly raised for their fur, and certain breeds of sheep are raised primarily for their wool. In addition, Angora goats are produced for mohair, which can be turned into a special-quality cloth. Clothing is sometimes made from animal skin, called hide. Prepared animal skin is known as leather. Between 5 and 10 percent of the market value of animals comes from the sales of hide. Bones, antlers, and other animal parts may be used in making accessories.

Summary:

Animals play vital roles in the lives of humans. They help fulfill two of the most basic human needs—food and clothing. Animal products from important livestock sources, such as beef, sheep, swine, and poultry, are good sources of nutrients for humans. Some wildlife animals are also used for food and other purposes. The main sources of clothing from animals are fibers and skins. Sometimes these are by-products of meat animals. Often, however, animals are raised specifically for products to make clothing. In short, animals are a primary source for food and clothing for the world.

Checking Your Knowledge:

1. What purposes can animals serve for people?
2. What is a dual-purpose animal?
3. What types of animals are identified as game?
4. What term is used to identify animal skin? What term defines prepared animal skin?

5. Besides producers, name as many meat industry workers as you can.

**Expanding Your Knowledge:**

Take a field trip to a local grocery store. As you walk the aisles, note the categories identified for each aisle. Then, note which categories originate from animals. Next, identify products you find in the grocery store from the following animals: beef cattle, dairy cattle, fish, chickens, turkeys, sheep, and swine. Can you identify any by-products? Record your observations in a one-page response.

**Web Links:**

**Meat Processing**
http://www.meatnews.com/

**Safe Handling of Wild Game Meats**
http://hgic.clemson.edu/factsheets/HGIC3516.htm

**The Life of Early Pioneers**
http://www.museumsofwv.org/kids/pioneers_clothing.html