



Fact Sheet

Food Safety Tips for Eggs

Eggs are good for you – but like other foods, they must be handled with care! Although *Salmonella* is rarely found in eggs in Canada, it pays to take care. Follow these tips from Canada's food safety experts.

Play it food safe!

- When cooking eggs for high-risk groups like young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weak immune systems, be sure to cook eggs thoroughly. Raw or lightly cooked eggs may contain *Salmonella* or other bacteria that can make you sick.

Shop with care

- Choose only refrigerated Grade A eggs.
- Check the shells! They should be clean and uncracked.
- Check the "best before" date on the package. If there is no "best before" date, make sure to use the eggs within the next three to four weeks.
- When shopping, pick up eggs and other cold food last so they stay cold.

Get off to a clean start

- Before and after you handle eggs, wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. Clean and sanitize all cooking equipment, utensils and work surfaces with a mild bleach solution.

BLEACH SANITIZER

- Combine 5 mL (1 tsp) of bleach with 750 mL (3 cups) of water in a labelled spray bottle.
- After cleaning, spray sanitizer on the surface/utensil and let stand briefly.
- Rinse with lots of clean water, and air dry (or use clean towels).

Keep your eggs cold!

- Always put eggs and other perishables away first when you get home from the grocery store. Keep eggs in the coldest section of the fridge, usually near the back.
- Store eggs in their original carton! It protects them from odours and damage – and you will be able to check the "best before" date easily. (Remember to use older eggs first!)
- If raw eggs crack by accident, remove them from the shell and put them in a covered container in the refrigerator and use them within four days.
- Hard-boiled eggs can be stored in the fridge for one week in a covered container.

Cold facts about freezing eggs

To freeze whole raw eggs or raw egg whites:

- Beat the eggs until well blended.
- Pour them into a freezer container, and seal tightly.
- Label the container with the date and the number of eggs.

To freeze raw egg yolks:

- Beat in 1/8 tsp salt or 1 ½ tsp sugar or corn syrup for every four egg yolks.
- Pour them into a freezer container, and seal tightly.
- Label the container with the date and the number of eggs.

Foodsafe tip: You can freeze eggs for up to four months. Defrost in the refrigerator, microwave or under cold running water.

Ask the “eggs-perts”!

Q1. Should eggs stay at room temperature for more than two hours?

- A1. No! Neither raw nor cooked eggs should be kept out of the refrigerator for more than two hours. Foods spoil quickly in the danger zone temperature range of 4°C to 60°C (40°F to 140°F).

Q2. Is it safe to eat raw or lightly cooked eggs?

- A2. Foods made from raw or lightly cooked eggs may be harmful to vulnerable people such as young children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with weak immune systems. When serving eggs to these people, cook them thoroughly.

Foodsafe tip: Try pasteurized egg products. They are an excellent and safe alternative to make food where the eggs won't be cooked. Try them when making eggnog, mayonnaise, Hollandaise sauce, cookie dough (if you eat raw cookie dough), salad dressings, ice cream and mousses. Pasteurization destroys disease-causing organisms such as salmonella.

Q3. Are hard-cooked decorated Easter eggs safe to eat?

- A3. Yes – if you follow a few quick rules. First, be sure to hard cook eggs and cool them immediately. Use a colouring dye that is non-toxic, and use eggs with uncracked shells. Store the coloured eggs in a covered container in the refrigerator until you need them.

Foodsafe tip: Want to display your eggs and eat them later? Display them in a bowl of ice.

Safeguarding Canada's Food Supply

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is the Government of Canada's key science-based regulator for food safety*, animal health and plant protection. At the CFIA, the safety of Canada's food supply is central to everything we do.

** in partnership with Health Canada*

For more information on food safety, visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency Web site at www.inspection.gc.ca

You can also find food safety information on the Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education Web site at www.canfightbac.org

P0465E-06

April 2006