

10590 Armstrong Avenue Mather, CA 95655 • (916) 875-8440 • FAX (916) 875-8513  
[www.emd.SacCounty.net](http://www.emd.SacCounty.net)

## COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT EGGS

### What should I consider when buying eggs?

Buy whole un-cracked Grade AA or A eggs from refrigerated cases only. Then, get them home quickly and refrigerate them immediately. If it's hot outside or the distance is great, pack eggs and other perishable foods with ice or commercial coolant in an insulated bag or cooler in your car, rather than the trunk. Keep eggs refrigerated until you're ready to use them.



### How do I avoid Foodborne illness?



It is also very important to wash your hands with warm soapy water for at least 20 seconds prior to food handling and each preparation step. Unbroken fresh shell eggs may contain Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) in the yolk "yellow" and egg white. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends that everyone avoid eating raw or undercooked egg yolks, whites, or products containing them.

Keep raw whole eggs, egg mixtures, prepared egg dishes and other perishable foods refrigerated at 40° F or below when you're not cooking or eating them. These foods should not be left at room temperature for more than 2 hours, including the time you use to prepare and serve them. Allow no more than 30 minutes to 1 hour when it's 85° F or hotter. Cook egg dishes to an internal temperature of at least 160 degrees F.

### How do I maintain egg quality at home?

Do not wash eggs. At the plant, government regulations require that USDA-graded eggs be carefully washed and sanitized using special detergent as well as coated with a tasteless, natural mineral oil to protect them. To guard against breakage and odor absorption and to help prevent the loss of carbon dioxide and moisture which lowers egg quality, store raw shell eggs in their cartons. Place egg cartons on a middle or lower shelf where the temperature will fluctuate less than on the door. Refrigerated raw shell eggs will keep without significant quality loss for about 4 to 5 weeks beyond the pack date or about 3 weeks after you bring them home.



### **What are the proper internal temperatures for the refrigerator and freezer?**

Check occasionally with a thermometer to be sure your refrigerator temperature is 40° F or below and that your freezer temperature is 0° F or below. To maintain safe temperatures, allow cool air to circulate, rather than packing your refrigerator.



### **How should I store leftover egg whites and yolks?**

You can refrigerate raw whites for up to 4 days and unbroken raw yolks, covered with water, for up to 2 days in a tightly sealed container. If you can't use the yolks quickly enough, hard cook them just as you would cook whole eggs in the shell, drain them well and refrigerate them in a tightly sealed container for up to 4 or 5 days. For longer storage, freeze raw whites, sugared or salted yolks and cooked yolks for up to 1 year.

### **What other methods prolong egg storage?**

For longer storage, beat whole eggs just until blended, pour into freezer containers, seal the containers tightly, label with the number of eggs and the date and freeze for up to 1 year. Substitute 3 tablespoons thawed whole egg for 1 large fresh egg. Avoid freezing hard-cooked whole eggs or hard-cooked whites as freezing cause them to become tough and watery.

### **How do I freeze eggs?**

To freeze egg whites, break and separate the eggs, one at a time, making sure that no yolk gets in the whites. Pour the whites into freezer containers, seal the containers tightly, label with the number of egg whites and the date and freeze. For faster thawing and easier measuring, first freeze each white in an ice cube tray and then transfer to a freezer bag or container. Substitute 2 tablespoons thawed egg white for 1 large fresh white. To freeze whole eggs, beat yolks and whites together. Use frozen egg whites within one year. Eggs should not be frozen in their shells.

### **How should I defrost frozen eggs, egg products and cooked egg dishes?**

Defrost frozen eggs, egg products and cooked egg dishes in the refrigerator overnight, under running cold water, or by microwave. Do not thaw at room temperature. If reheating is necessary, cook eggs and egg containing dishes thoroughly to 160 degrees F. If the item is normally served cold, serve promptly after thawing.



### **What should I do with leftover egg-containing dishes?**

Promptly after you serve them, divide large amounts of leftovers into small, shallow containers and refrigerate them immediately so they'll cool quickly. Then, thoroughly reheat **to at least 160 degrees F**, then and eat them within 2 to 3 days. Without tasting them, discard any egg-containing leftovers that have been refrigerated more than 3 days.



**This information is provided in partnership with Sacramento County Cooperative Extension.**

The University of California prohibits discrimination or harassment of any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity, pregnancy (including childbirth, and medical conditions related to pregnancy or childbirth), physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), ancestry, marital status, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, or status as a covered veteran (covered veterans are special disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, Vietnam era veterans, or any other veterans who served on active duty during a war or in a campaign or expedition for which a campaign badge has been authorized) in any of its programs or activities. University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws. Inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies may be directed to the Affirmative Action/Staff Personnel Services Director, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 1111 Franklin Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Oakland, CA 94607-5200, (510) 867-6396.

Sacramento County Board of Supervisors – Roger Dickinson, 1st District; Ma Collins, 2nd District; Susan Peters, 3rd District; Roberts MacGlashan, 4th District; and Don Norick, 5th District. Also Terry Schurten, County Executive; Penelope Clade, Countywide Services Agency; and Gloria J. Barrett, Director, Cooperative Extension

