

Recommended Egg Production & Handling Practices
Developed by the National Egg Regulatory Officials

1. Use chicks from a certified source (NPIP Salmonella enteritidis monitored, Salmonella pullorum free). If in doubt, contact the State Veterinarian office.

- (a). Raise chickens isolated from all other poultry.
- (b). Use feed from a reliable source; crumbles or pellets are heat treated and less likely to be contaminated.
- (c). Use good sanitation practices:
 - Keep litter and nest boxes dry, change nest litter weekly,
 - use potable water and keep water and drinkers clean,
 - keep feed dry and feeders clean, control rodents, flies and beetles,
 - keep wild birds, pets and predators away from the chicken pen,
 - don't use un-sanitized equipment from other farms,
 - clean and sanitize all equipment and the coop between flocks.
- (d). Use pest control compounds and sanitizers in compliance with label instructions, and only if approved for use in poultry houses and around laying flocks.
- (e). Use only approved flock medications under veterinary supervision. Do not use eggs during the withdrawal period.
- (f). Maintain flock health and consult veterinarian on good health management practices.
- (g). Collect eggs at least twice daily.

2. Use only clean eggs.

- (a). Lightly soiled eggs may be used for sale only if :
 - eggs are either lightly sanded to remove small areas of dirt **or**
 - eggs are carefully washed in **potable water 20° F warmer than the egg temperature** and at least **90° F**, using only sanitizers* approved for egg washing. Place eggs in suspended colander and rinse **without submersing** them in the wash solution. **Eggs must be dried** immediately afterwards. Sanded eggs must not be washed.
 - * bleach solution made of ½ oz. of household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) in 1 gallon of water may be used.*
- (b). Place eggs in clean, new cardboard boxes and store eggs **at or below 45° F**.
- (c). Sell only eggs of **Grade A** quality or better.
- (d). Shelf life of eggs is 30-45 days from lay if handled this way and stored under refrigeration.
- (e). **Keep eggs refrigerated at all times**; use coolers that plugs into a cigarette lighter or use re-freezable cool packs for farmer markets, fairs etc. . Don't use ice, eggs should stay dry.

3. At home store eggs in the refrigerator on the shelf in the egg cartons.

- (a). Use only clean and unbroken eggs. Discard broken and dirty eggs, eggs should **not** be washed just before use.

- (b). Break eggs one at a time and avoid mixing the shell with the egg content. Remove bits of egg shell with a clean utensil.
- (c). Wash hands thoroughly with soap and hot water before beginning food preparation and use clean utensils, equipment and countertops.
- (d). Do not leave shell eggs and eggs in any form at room temperature for more than 2 hours including preparation and serving. Promptly after serving, refrigerate leftovers in shallow containers so they will cool quickly.
- (c). Salmonella and many other bacteria will not survive if held at a temperature of 140° F for 3 ½ minutes or at 160° F and they will not grow at a temperature below 40° F.