

Food safety—Salmonella

Egg safety for food businesses

Recent foodborne illness outbreaks have been associated with foods that have been prepared using raw and lightly cooked eggs and egg products. Examples of foods that contain raw or lightly cooked egg include mayonnaise, aioli, scrambled eggs, custard, cheesecake, eggnog, deep fried ice-cream and mousse.



Never use cracked or dirty eggs in the preparation of food. Dirty eggs may have harmful *Salmonella* bacteria on the shell. Cracked eggs allow *Salmonella* to enter and grow inside the egg. However even eggs with clean, uncracked shells can pose a risk if handled incorrectly.

Cross contamination can also occur when handling eggs and equipment and benches should be cleaned and sanitised to avoid contamination of ready-to-eat foods.

Salmonella

Salmonella is the most commonly reported bacteria responsible for foodborne illness outbreaks and is usually associated with eggs and egg products. *Salmonella* infection causes gastroenteritis (commonly known as ‘gastro’) and symptoms can include headache, fever, stomach cramps, diarrhoea, nausea and vomiting which can last days or weeks.

High risk processes

Recent foodborne illness outbreaks have been linked to egg based products (e.g. mayonnaise, aioli, raw egg wash, custard, mousse, deep fried ice cream) that are left out of refrigeration during service and regularly moved in and out of refrigeration over a number of days.

Repeated temperature abuse of raw egg products allows *Salmonella* to grow to harmful levels and will result in food poisoning for the consumer.



Remember

It is important to keep raw egg products (e.g. mayonnaise, aioli, custard) under proper temperature control after preparation and during service and make smaller batches more frequently.

The preparation of deep fried ice cream involves a flash frying process that is only intended to crisp the outer layer and is inadequate to kill *Salmonella* that may be present on the egg coating. Therefore the egg wash used to prepare deep fried ice-cream must be either freshly made or stored under refrigeration before use.



Remember

It is important that the raw egg wash and coating ingredients (e.g. crumbs, coconut, flour) used to make ice cream balls is never used to coat other foods or left at room temperature after preparation. This should be freshly prepared as required.

Egg safety

DO NOT wash eggs

Washing eggs allows *Salmonella* bacteria to move from the outside of the shell to inside the egg. Never wash any eggs and throw away all dirty eggs.

Storage of raw eggs and egg products

When storing eggs and egg products:

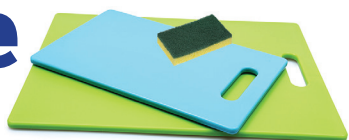
- eggs and egg products should be stored under refrigeration, to minimise the risk of harmful *Salmonella* bacteria growing
- avoid cross contamination by discarding cartons that contained cracked eggs
- make smaller batches of raw egg products
- store eggs in their original carton and do not use eggs that are 'out of date.'



Remember

Hands should be washed and dried before and after handling eggs.

Ensure
high hygiene
standards



Cross contamination

Food businesses need to ensure there is no cross contamination between eggs or egg products and other food items. Equipment that has been used to prepare egg products such as stick blenders, mixers, food processors and chopping boards must be cleaned and sanitised prior to use with a dishwasher or chemical sanitiser. Blenders, mixers and processors must be dismantled to allow proper cleaning of internal parts.

Handling of raw eggs and egg products

The following precautions should be taken when handling eggs:

- wash hands before and after handling eggs and avoiding unnecessary handling of eggs
- minimise the contact between the shell and egg contents when breaking eggs
- ensure utensils, equipment and other food contact surfaces such as benches are cleaned and sanitised after handling eggs and egg products.
- use a clean separate container for each batch of raw egg product and only refill the container once it has been cleaned and sanitised

Separating eggs

To minimise cross contamination egg shells should not be used to separate the egg white from the yolk as *Salmonella* bacteria on the surface of the shell can be transferred to the contents of the egg. Separating the eggs using bare hands is also a risk as hands may become contaminated with *Salmonella* bacteria, resulting in cross contamination.

Businesses should use a clean and sanitised egg separator to reduce the risk of any *Salmonella* bacteria present on the shell contaminating the egg yolk or egg white.



Further information

Contact your local government:

www.dilgp.qld.gov.au/local-government-directory

www.health.qld.gov.au

