

## **Thoroughly Cooked Means Thoroughly Safe: A Message from America's Egg Farmers**

You've probably heard about the recent egg recall. As egg farmers, we're concerned, and continue to work closely with the FDA and USDA to help ensure the safest and highest quality eggs possible. The potentially affected eggs, which make up less than 1% of all US eggs, have been removed from store shelves.

You may be wondering if eggs are safe to eat. Yes they are. Thoroughly cooked eggs are thoroughly safe eggs, according to the Center for Disease Control and the Food and Drug Administration. Eggs should be cooked until the whites and yolks are firm.

To find out more information on this recall and the safe handling of eggs, please visit [www.EggSafety.org](http://www.EggSafety.org). **And remember, thoroughly cooked means thoroughly safe.**

### **Here's what you need to know in light of the recent egg recall:**

#### **Is it safe to buy eggs?**

Yes. However, as a general food safety rule, it is recommended that eggs be cooked until the white and yolks are firm or, for dishes containing eggs, until an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit is reached. Salmonella is destroyed by the heat of cooking.

#### **What is Salmonella?**

Salmonella is a bacterium that can be contained within eggs. While eggs may look normal in appearance, inadequate refrigeration, improper handling and insufficient cooking are all factors that may contribute to outbreaks. It is important to know that Salmonella is destroyed by the heat of cooking.

If you need more information, you can call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555.

#### **What are the symptoms of Salmonella?**

A person infected with the Salmonella bacterium may experience a fever, abdominal cramps, and diarrhea beginning 12 to 72 hours after consuming a contaminated food or beverage. For more information call the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555.

#### **How can I prevent Salmonella contamination at home?**

There are four basic tenets of safe food-handling practices when it comes to eggs: Clean, Separate, Cook and Chill.

- **Clean:** This includes thoroughly cleaning your hands, as well as the surfaces and utensils that come into contact with raw eggs – an important step for avoiding cross-contamination.
- **Separate:** Be sure to separate eggs from other foods in your grocery cart, grocery bags and in the refrigerator to prevent cross-contamination.
- **Cook:** In addition, eggs should be cooked until the white and yolks are firm or, for dishes containing eggs, until an internal temperature of 160 degrees Fahrenheit is reached. Salmonella is destroyed by the heat of cooking.
- **Chill:** Lastly, eggs should always be kept in the main section of the refrigerator at a temperature between 33 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and eggs accidentally left at room temperature should be discarded after two hours, or one hour in warm weather.

For more information, you can visit [www.fightbac.org](http://www.fightbac.org) or [www.eggsafety.org](http://www.eggsafety.org).