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Make Sure Your Easter Egg Hunt is Fun and Safe

Egg preparation safety tips to prevent foodborne illnesses

Sacramento, CA – What would Easter be without decorating, hiding, hunting and eating Easter eggs! Just a reminder, all this handling provides opportunities for foodborne illness.

The Sacramento County Department of Environmental Management recommends a few egg safety tips to help keep you and your family healthy.

- Always buy eggs from a refrigerated case. Choose eggs with clean, uncracked shells.
- Buy eggs before the "Sell-By" or "EXP" (expiration) date on the carton.
- Take eggs straight home from the grocery store and refrigerate them right away. Check to be sure your refrigerator is set at 41°F or below. Don't take eggs out of the carton to put them in the refrigerator -- the carton protects them. Keep the eggs in the coldest part of the refrigerator — not on the door.
- Raw shell eggs in the carton can stay in your refrigerator for three to five weeks from the purchase date. Although the "Sell-By" date might pass during that time, the eggs are still safe to use (the date is not required by federal law, but some states may require it).
- Always wash your hands with warm water and soap before and after handling raw eggs. To avoid cross-contamination, you should also wash forks, knives, spoons and all counters and other surfaces that touch the eggs with hot water and soap.
- Don't keep raw or cooked eggs out of the refrigerator more than two hours.
- Egg dishes such as deviled eggs or egg salad should be used within 3 to 4 days.

For more information on egg preparation safety tips, visit the following websites:

- <http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm077342.htm>
- http://www.fsis.usda.gov/fact_sheets/Focus_On_Shell_Eggs/index.asp

Visit the Environmental Management Department website at www.emd.saccounty.net or call (916) 875-8484.

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