

Proper Handling and Transportation of Eggs for Sale at Kentucky Farmers' Markets

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Regardless of the number of eggs produced, and whether the eggs are for home use or sale, careful egg handling is very important. The United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) lists eggs as a potentially hazardous food, therefore careful handling is important. In Kentucky, if you sell more than 60 dozen eggs a week you need to purchase a retail license. The same holds true if you want to sell your eggs to a retail store to be re-sold or to a distributor that will sell them for you. If you produce fewer than 60 dozen eggs a week and sell directly to consumers, you do not need a license but must follow all the same safe handling guidelines and regulations.

After an egg is laid, it becomes exposed to the environment within the poultry house. Here it can pick up a variety of different types of bacteria. Most have no health risks. Some organisms, however, can cause egg spoilage while others can cause food poisoning. Salmonella bacteria are found in the digestive tract of all animals and can contaminate the poultry houses. Some types of salmonella cause food poisoning in humans. Eggs may

become contaminated with salmonella, requiring that the eggs be handled and processed with care.

The following guidelines should be followed:

- Make sure your hands are clean when you collect eggs.
- Gather eggs as often as possible and wash them as soon as possible after collection.
- Remove badly soiled and cracked eggs before they are washed.
- Eggs should be below 90°F before washing and the wash water temperature should be between 110°-120°F.
- Never use wash water that is more than 50°F above the temperature of the egg as this will cause cracking of the shell.
- Wash the eggs in running water and avoid submerging eggs.
- Never put wet eggs into cartons or boxes because wet eggs can pick up bacteria easily.

You must use new egg cartons that meet the correct labelling requirements. They must be labeled with nutritional information, refrigeration requirements and safe handling instructions, in addition to the producer name and address

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 egg (50g)	
Servings per Container 12	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 70	Calories from Fat 45
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 5g	8%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 185mg	62%
Sodium 70mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 0g	0%
Protein 6g	12%
Vitamin A 6% • Vitamin C 0%	
Calcium 2% • Iron 4%	
Not a significant source of dietary fiber or sugars.	
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet:	
	Calories 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Potassium	3,500mg 3,500mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g
Protein	50g 65g
Calories per gram	
Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4	

Source: American Egg Board

and date of packaging. You may not reuse egg cartons.

All table eggs must be stored below 45°F (7.2°C), including during transport and display for sale. Random spot-checks are common at farmers' markets and any eggs that are found to be above the minimum temperature will be seized and destroyed without compensation. You will be required to show a

Safe-handing Instructions

To prevent illness from bacteria: Keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.

thermometer to prove your eggs are stored at the correct temperature.

If you are selling your eggs at a farmers' market, a chest-type cooler can be used (Figure 4). It is important, however, that the eggs never come into contact with the ice or the water from the melted ice.

A divider between the eggs and the area that holds the ice is required and there must be at least three inches between the eggs and the ice.

A divider like the one in Figure 1 is relatively inexpensive and easy to make. The dimensions can be adjusted to fit the size of the cooler.

To create the divider, all you need is a piece of hardware cloth cut to the size of the cooler (see Figure 2). Remove a section of each corner so that it can be folded into a shelf to fit over the two pieces of 2x4 lumber, as shown in Figure 3.



Figure 1. Example of a simple divider for keeping the ice at least three inches from the eggs in a cooler.

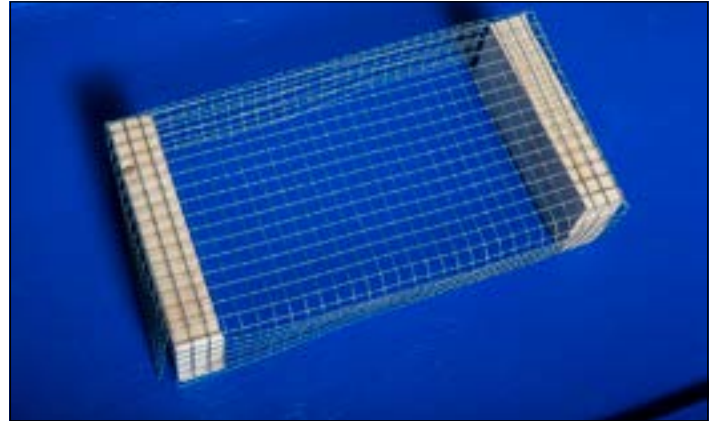


Figure 3. Assembled divider.

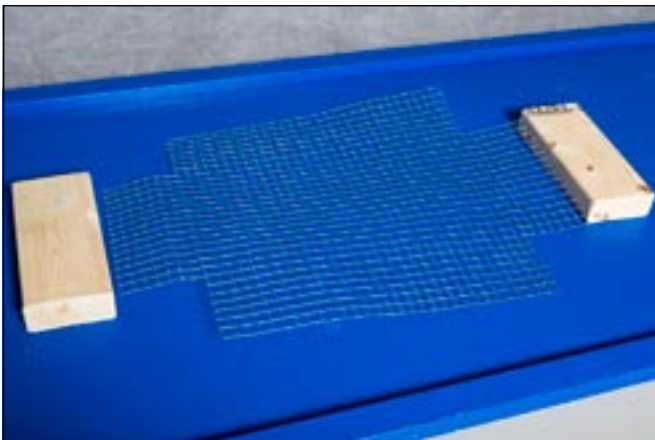


Figure 2. Materials needed for the divider shown in Figure 1. A piece of hardware cloth and two pieces of 2x4, all cut to the size of the cooler.



Figure 4. Using the divider in a cooler to store eggs. Note that the eggs are above and separated from the ice and cold pouch and the thermometer is at egg level.

302 KAR 10:100. Refrigeration of Eggs and Temperature Requirements.

Section 1. The refrigeration and temperature requirements in the standards of quality for shell eggs shall be governed by the following specifications:

(1) To prevent undue deterioration, a shell egg packed in a container for the purpose of resale to a consumer shall be stored and transported under refrigeration at an ambient temperature of forty-five (45) degrees Fahrenheit or seven and two-tenths (7.2) degrees Centigrade or less.

(5) An egg that does not meet the refrigeration requirements either in transit, storage or display shall be seized or destroyed by a Department of Agriculture inspector. (24 Ky.R. 2242; Am. 2620; eff. 6-10-98.)