

For Information call: 321-633-1702
bshephar@ufl.edu

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Easter Egg Safety

Elizabeth C. Shephard

How many people have left their beautifully colored Easter eggs out on the table for decoration and hard boiled snacking? This was and is common practices in some homes. What does it mean to keep eggs safe? Around Easter, people fall into traditions instead of science, here are a few tips to keep your Easter eggs safe.

- Because Easter eggs are handled so frequently, wash hands thoroughly before handling eggs at every step, including cooking, cooling and dyeing. Take advantage of the occasion to teach youngsters about cleanliness and safe food handling.
- Refrigerate hard cooked eggs in their cartons if you won't be coloring them right after cooking. Refrigerate them again right after dyeing them and after they've been displayed
- Make sure the eggs you color aren't cracked. If any crack during dyeing or while on display, discard them along with any eggs that have been out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours.
- Use food coloring or specially-made-food-grade egg dyes dissolved in water that is warmer than the eggs.
- If you use hard-cooked eggs as a centerpiece or other decoration or for hiding and they are kept out of refrigeration for many hours or several days, cook extra eggs for eating and discard the eggs that have been left out. Consider the discarded eggs a very inexpensive craft project or game.
- Use the edible contents emptied from eggshells immediately in recipes which include mixed yolks and whites and call for thorough cooking, such as casseroles, custards, quiches, cakes or breads. Or, freeze the contents for later use.

In fact, the week after Easter is designated as Egg Salad Week. The intent is fun, but has a serious intent. Since, at this time of year, refrigerators across America are stocked with Easter eggs which should be used within a week of hard-cooking, the observance is both timely and appropriate.

Information from the American Egg Board