



# UW

# PRESERVING EGGS

Extension

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Eggs are perishable, just like raw meat, poultry, and fish. Unbroken, clean, fresh shell eggs may contain Salmonella bacteria that can cause foodborne illness. Everyone is advised against eating raw or undercooked whole eggs, yolks, and whites or products containing raw or undercooked eggs. Eggs must be safely handled, promptly refrigerated, and thoroughly cooked to be safe. Safely storing eggs is essential for quality and safety. Some older methods of storing eggs are not recommended today due to advancements and knowledge of egg safety. One method that has recently surfaced is storing eggs in lime water which is not recommended. In addition, water glass, chemically known as sodium silicate, is not recommended to preserve eggs.

## Refrigerating Eggs

In America, refrigeration is one recommended method of extending the storage life of eggs.

- Discard eggs that are unclean, cracked, broken, or leaking.
- Store eggs promptly in a refrigerator at a temperature of 40°F or below.
- Eggs are safe to be consumed four to five weeks beyond the date collected or pack date (Julian date), as long as they are kept refrigerated. Use older eggs first.
- Use or eat hard-cooked eggs (in the shell or peeled) within one week after cooking.

## Freezing Eggs

If you have an excess of fresh eggs, freezing is the best way to preserve them. They cannot be frozen in the shell because the expansion of the white and yolk will cause the shell to break. Hard-cooked eggs cannot be frozen because the white becomes rubbery. The recommended length of freezer storage for frozen eggs is 9 to 12 months.

- Select fresh, chilled eggs, and break each separately into a clean bowl.

- Examine each egg for freshness, and remove any pieces of the shell before mixing with other eggs. Eggs with blood specks are safe to eat; removing the specks is optional.
- Freeze eggs in amounts that will be used in recipes. It is necessary to add sugar or salt to whole eggs or yolks before freezing to prevent graininess.

### WHOLE EGGS

Stir eggs with a fork to break yolks and mix them well with the whites. Do not whip in air. Add 1 1/2 Tablespoons sugar, 1 1/2 Tablespoons corn syrup, OR 1/2 teaspoon salt per cup of whole eggs, depending on the intended use. Strain through a sieve or colander to improve uniformity. Package, allowing 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze. Another method of freezing a whole-egg mixture is to use ice trays. Measure 3 Tablespoons of egg mixture into each compartment of an ice tray. Freeze until solid. Remove frozen cubes, and package them in moisture-vapor resistant containers. Seal and freeze. Three Tablespoons of the egg mixture (one cube) equal one whole egg.



### EGG YOLKS

Separate eggs. Stir yolks gently. Add 1 1/2 Tablespoons sugar, 1 1/2 Tablespoons corn syrup, OR 1/2 teaspoon salt per cup of egg yolks, depending on the intended use. Strain through a sieve. Package, allowing 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze. One tablespoon of the yolk mixture equals one egg yolk.



### EGG WHITES

Gently mix whites; do not whip. Strain through a sieve. No sugar or salt is needed. Package, leaving 1/2-inch headspace. Seal and freeze. Two Tablespoons of the egg-white mixture equal one egg white.



## Pickling Eggs

Pickled eggs are hard-cooked eggs that have been soaked in a solution of vinegar, salt, spices, and other seasonings. There are no home canning directions for pickled eggs. All of the following pickled egg recipes are for storage in the refrigerator. Pickled eggs should never be at room temperature except for serving time when, they should be limited to no more than 2 hours.

**Caution:** Home pickled eggs stored at room temperature have caused botulism.

Containers (e.g., jars and lids) in which pickling will occur should be sterilized (e.g., placed in boiling water for a prescribed period).

### *Sterilization Process*

To sterilize jars and lids after washing in detergent and rinsing thoroughly, submerge them, open side up, in a boiling-water canner with the rack in the bottom. Fill the canner with enough warm water so it is 1 inch above the tops of the jars. Bring the water to a boil, and boil 10 minutes at altitudes of less than 1,000 feet. At higher elevations, boil 1 additional minute for each additional 1,000 feet elevation.

### *Egg Selection*

Select eggs with clean, uncracked shells which are not extremely fresh. Use eggs that are at least a week old. Eggs that are too fresh are usually difficult to peel.

## *Cooking Eggs*

- Bring the eggs to room temperature before cooking. If the eggs have been stored in the refrigerator, they can be warmed gently under flowing, warm tap water. Bringing the eggs to room temperature makes them much less likely to crack in hot water. In addition, the temperature of the egg at the start of the cooking process will affect the cooking time. An egg that is at room temperature at the beginning of the cooking process will require about one minute less cooking time than eggs taken directly from the refrigerator.
- Gently place the eggs in a single layer in a pan with enough cold water to cover the eggs completely (approximately by 1 1/2 inches). Starting with cold water lets you heat the egg more slowly, which keeps the whites from getting rubbery.
- Over high heat, bring water JUST to a rapid boil. As soon as the water reaches a rapid boil, remove the pan from heat and cover the egg pan tightly with a lid.
- Set timer for 20 minutes for eggs.
- Drain off water from the eggs after exactly 20 minutes. Watch the time when cooking the eggs carefully. Overcook causes a green layer to form around the yolk. This layer is caused by a reaction between the iron in the yolk and the sulfur in the white. Heat speeds up this reaction, so the longer your eggs cook, the greater the chance of discoloration.
- Transfer the eggs to the bowl of ice cubes and cold water. Let eggs cool for at least 10 minutes in cold water, then drain.
- Crack the entire shell around the egg for easier peeling. Begin peeling at the large end where the air cell is usually located. Peeling under running water can help remove all the thin shell membranes.

## RECIPES

Each of these recipes uses 12 peeled, hard-cooked eggs. The directions for each recipe are to bring all the ingredients except the eggs to a boil, reduce the heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Pack no more than one dozen peeled, hard-cooked eggs loosely into a warm, pre-sterilized quart jar or another similar size container that can be closed tightly. There needs to be plenty of pickling solution and enough to completely cover the eggs. Pour the hot pickling solution over the eggs in the jar, cover, and refrigerate immediately.

After making the eggs, the eggs require some time to season (i.e., pick up the flavors from the pickling brine). Keep them refrigerated at all times. If small eggs are used, 1 to 2 weeks are usually allowed for seasoning to occur. Medium or large eggs may require 2 to 4 weeks to become well seasoned. Use the eggs within 3 to 4 months for the best quality.

### Red Beet Eggs

- 1 cup red beet juice (from canned beets)
- 1 1/2 cups cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- a few canned whole tiny red beets (or several slices of beets can be used)

### Sweet And Sour Eggs

- 1 1/2 cups pasteurized apple cider
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 1 package (about 12 oz.) red cinnamon candy
- 1 Tablespoon mixed pickling spice
- 2 Tablespoons salt
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt



## Dilled Eggs

- 1 1/2 cups white vinegar
- 1 cup water
- 3/4 teaspoon dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 3 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 teaspoon mustard seed
- 1/2 teaspoon onion juice or minced onion
- 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic or 1 peeled garlic clove

## Dark And Spicy Eggs

- 1 1/2 cups cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 Tablespoon dark brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon mixed pickling spice
- 1/4 teaspoon liquid smoke or hickory smoke salt
- 2 teaspoons salt

## Cidered Eggs

- 1 1/2 cups pasteurized sweet apple cider or apple juice
- 1/2 cup white vinegar
- 6 thin slices of onion
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon whole pickling spice
- 1 peeled garlic clove

(Sources: eggsafety.org; www.incredibleegg.org; www.fsis.usda.gov; nchfp.uga.edu; usda.gov)

## Pineapple Pickled Eggs

- 1 can (12 oz.) unsweetened pineapple juice
  - If sweetened pineapple juice is used, omit the sugar
- 1 1/2 cups white vinegar
- 2 medium onions, peeled and sliced
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon whole pickling spice

