

COMMUNICATION

Food Policy and Programs Branch

To: Food Businesses

Title: Preparation of Raw Egg Products

Restaurants, cafes, bakeries, caterers and manufacturers that make raw egg products need to be aware of the associated risks of preparing raw egg products and ensure safe food handling practices are maintained at all times.

Businesses should try to use alternatives to raw eggs in foods which are not cooked. Alternatives include commercially produced dressings and sauces, or pasteurised egg pulp.

If businesses continue to use raw eggs in foods, then food safety controls must be adopted. There are many controls that can be implemented to help minimise the risk of harmful bacteria being in foods.

Many food poisoning outbreaks have been associated with foods containing raw or partially cooked eggs, including:

- Sauces and dressings such as mayonnaise, aioli, hollandaise and tartare sauces.
- Desserts made without a cooking step such as tiramisu, cheesecake (cold-set), meringue, mousse, custard (cold-set), fried ice-cream batter, some ice cream and gelati made in-house.
- Drinks such as protein drinks containing raw egg.

Safer Alternatives

Raw egg products made with pasteurised egg pulp are safer than those made from raw eggs as it eliminates the associated egg handling risks. Pasteurisation destroys harmful bacteria such as *Salmonella*.

- For foods that traditionally contain raw or lightly cooked eggs (e.g. mayonnaise, hollandaise sauce, mousse), use commercially prepared foods instead of making these foods from raw eggs.
- Use pasteurised egg pulp instead of raw eggs as an ingredient in foods that traditionally contain raw or lightly cooked eggs.

Food Safety Tips

Below are recommendations on how to prepare and store raw eggs products safely.

1. Process

- Ensure you use a standard recipe and process. It may be useful to have your process and recipe checked by an expert food technologist.
- Use ingredients such as lemon juice or vinegar to acidify the raw egg product to a pH value at or below 4.6. Acidifying raw egg products and storing them under temperature control is crucial for the safety of these products. This should be done using a standard recipe or checking with a pH meter/strip.
- Immediately refrigerate the raw egg product at or below 5°C where possible or ensure that the 2hr/4hr rule is adopted: <http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/Food/2hour-4hour-rule.pdf>.



2. Shelf Life

It is best to make raw egg products fresh every day in small amounts, not in bulk. If products need to be made in bulk, minimise the amount of time that prepared raw egg products are out of the fridge. A small amount sufficient for that meal period should be decanted using a clean utensil. Throw out any remaining amounts decanted at the end of the meal period.

Products made in bulk should be date marked and closely monitored for batch control.

It is the food businesses responsibility to determine the shelf life of the product. Any food safety issues associated must be considered when determining a use by or best before date. It may be useful to have your process and recipe checked by an expert food technologist to validate the shelf life of your products.

3. Temperature

Ideally store all prepared raw egg products under refrigeration at or below 5°C. Temperature is easier to maintain when products are stored in multiple small containers, rather than one large container. This will also help you minimise handling the products more than necessary.

Where it is not possible to keep the product refrigerated during the meal period, the 2 hour/4 hour rule must be followed: <http://www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/Food/2hour-4hour-rule.pdf>.

4. Sanitation and hygiene

- Start with clean and sanitised equipment, containers and utensils.
- Do not top up an empty container or transfer the remains of a container to a fresh container.
- Only use a fresh utensil with a fresh container.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitise any food blenders, equipment, storage containers after use when empty. Particular care may need to be taken with hard-to-reach spots such as spouts or under sealing lips.
- The most common sanitation method for killing food poisoning bacteria is the use of chemicals however, heat can also be used. Food businesses must make sure that any chemical sanitiser used is 'food grade' – safe for food contact surfaces and that manufacturer's instructions are followed.

5. Purchasing, handling and storing eggs safely

Don't use dirty or cracked eggs. It is illegal for food businesses to sell dirty or cracked eggs. Ensure that the eggs are individually stamped with the producer's or packer's unique identification. Use safe food handling practices when using eggs to prevent transfer of harmful bacteria into foods.

Note: Refer to Issue 27B - Egg Safety for more information on tips on safe egg handling practices. This information can be found online at: www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/food-index.htm

Where can I get more information?

More information can be obtained from the Environmental Health Officer at your local council or alternatively from SA Health.

For more information

Food Policy & Programs

SA Health

Telephone: 8226 7100

11 Hindmarsh Square, Adelaide SA 5000

www.health.sa.gov.au/pehs/food-index.htm

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