

Chief Health Officer Alert

3 March 2014

Status: Active

Salmonellosis and Raw Eggs

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Date issued: 3 March 2014
Issued by: Dr Rosemary Lester, Chief Health Officer, Victoria
Issued to: Restaurants, cafes and caterers

Key messages

- The Department of Health and the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) are investigating two outbreaks of Salmonellosis linked to undercooked or raw-egg products made from eggs sourced from a western Victorian supplier, Green Eggs.
- The Department of Health and DEPI are working with Green Eggs to address this issue and a range of egg handling, cleaning and hygiene measures are now being implemented at the Green Eggs free range farm to improve food safety.
- Food businesses such as restaurants, cafes and caterers are advised not to use eggs sourced from Green Eggs for the preparation of raw or semi-cooked egg products until advised that the required changes to improve food safety at the farm have been successfully implemented.
- Eggs are a highly nutritious food, used in many different recipes and ways. However, like meat, seafood and dairy products, eggs have the potential to be hazardous. To reduce the risk of making your customers ill, particular care must be taken to handle and store eggs and raw egg products safely.

What is the issue?

A number of people who have eaten raw egg products sourced from the egg producer, Green Eggs, have developed Salmonellosis. The Department of Health and DEPI are working with Green Eggs to ensure that potential risks are addressed.

Who is at risk?

Individuals who have eaten raw egg products sourced from Green Eggs. The elderly, people with lowered immunity, children and pregnant women are particularly at risk of severe illness.

Prevention

Do not use eggs sourced from Green Eggs for the preparation of raw or semi-cooked egg products until advised.

Thoroughly cooking eggs renders them safe from contaminants such as salmonella.

When sourcing eggs, only accept or use eggs that are supplied in clean packaging, correctly labelled with details of the supplier, batch number identification and a best-before-date. Only use clean, non-cracked eggs and store eggs correctly.

The following should always be adhered to:

- Use clean, sanitised and separate containers for each raw egg product.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitise between uses.
- Do **not** top up raw egg products from different batches.
- It is safest to make raw egg products daily, in small batches rather than in large containers.
- Always store raw egg products under refrigeration.
- Store raw egg products for the shortest time possible and dispose of frequently - preferably **every 24 hours or less**.
- Consider alternatives to raw egg products.

Ensure all staff read this information and comply with your food safety program.

More information

More information on food safety is available at:

- Better Health Channel – eggs
(http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Food_safety_storing_eggs?open)
- Food Safety (www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety/)
- Do food safely (<http://dofoodsafely.health.vic.gov.au/>)

For more information on egg safety for restaurants, cafes and caterers see:

Chief Health Officer Advisory - egg safety information for restaurants, cafes and caterers (14 June 2013). This Advisory is also available in Arabic, Simplified Chinese and Vietnamese.

Contacts

- Food Safety Hotline, phone: 1300 364 352 or email: foodsafety@health.vic.gov.au
- Your local council health department
- Your food safety auditor



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Authorised by the Victorian Government, Melbourne.