

EGGcellent Eggs for Easter

When it comes to Easter, eggs are the main attraction from the holiday meal to the family Easter Egg Hunt. So we tend to hear more about them this time of year, but eggs should be a part of your healthy lifestyle year around. So let's delve into some EGGxtra facts, cooking tips, and food safety information.

The United States produces approximately 75 billion eggs a year, which is about 10% of the world supply. These eggs come from about 280 million laying birds, each producing from 250 to 300 eggs a year. Egg producers have done a good job keeping the prices low for consumers, especially compared to the rising costs of other foods. For around 20 cents each they are an affordable way to start breakfast each morning. When comparing the costs of high protein foods, eggs are definitely one of our best bargains.

One egg packs a big punch when it comes to nutrition, because the protein in eggs is the highest quality protein found in any food. For only 70 calories it is full of vitamins and minerals essential for muscle strength, muscle-loss prevention, brain function, healthy pregnancy, eye health, and more.

They can also play a vital role in weight management. Did you know that one egg provides 6 grams of protein, which is 12% of the Recommended Daily Value? Also, there is a misconception that the egg white has all the protein, while in truth, the yolk actually provides nearly half of it. The high-quality protein in the egg helps you feel full and satisfied longer, which aids in weight loss and weight management. Many people find that starting their day with eggs for breakfast helps them by reducing snacking between meals, which results in a lower caloric intake.

Boiled eggs are great as a snack or as a part of a delicious recipe. While most of us have been boiling eggs for years, have you ever stopped and wondered if you were doing it correctly? Well, since we will all probably be boiling dozens of eggs for Easter, it might be a good time to learn the best way to do it.

Basic Hard Boiled Eggs

- 1) Put clean, fresh eggs in a pot and add water until it rises 1 inch above the eggs.
- 2) Next, put the pot on the stove and turn on the heat, bringing the water to a rolling boil.
- 3) Turn the heat off and cover the pot with a lid. Let the eggs sit for 14 – 18 minutes, the larger the egg the longer it takes.
- 4) Then drain the hot water and replace it with cold water. This stops the “carryover cooking” of the egg, most especially the yolk. The cold water will create a layer of steam between the shell and the egg white, which makes the peeling much easier.
- 5) Once the egg has cooled, gently crack it in several places and remove the shell.

- 6) Refrigerate.

Egg Safety for Easter Eggs

If you plan on eating your hard boiled eggs after the big hunt, there are a few food safety rules you need to follow.

- Wash your hands between all the steps of cooking, cooling, dyeing and decorating.
- Be sure that all the decorating materials you use are food safe.
- Keep the eggs refrigerated as much as possible. Keep putting them back into the refrigerator whenever you're not working with them.
- Dye the eggs in water warmer than the eggs so they don't absorb the dye water.
- If you hide the decorated eggs, put them where they won't come into contact with pets, other animals or birds or lawn chemicals.
- After you've found all the hidden eggs, throw out any that have cracked or have been out at room temperature for more than two hours. Eat uncracked, refrigerated hard-boiled eggs within a week of cooking them.

Ham and Egg Breakfast Bowl

Eggs, ham and cheese join forces in a three ingredient breakfast bowl that's fast and mess-free.

Prep Time: 15 seconds **Cook Time:** 45-60 seconds **Servings:** 1 serving

Ingredients

1 thin slice deli ham (1 ounce)
1 egg, beaten
2 tablespoons of shredded cheddar cheese

- 1) **LINE** the bottom of 8-oz ramekin or custard cup with ham slice, folding ham in half, if necessary. **POUR** egg over ham.
- 2) **MICROWAVE** on **HIGH** 30 seconds; stir. **MICROWAVE** until egg is almost set, 15 to 30 seconds longer.
- 3) **TOP** with cheese. **SERVE** immediately.
- 4) Don't overcook. Scrambled eggs will continue to cook and firm up after removed from microwave. Microwave ovens vary. Cook time may need to be adjusted.

For more information, please feel free to call the Extension Office at 903-473-4580 or visit us at rains.agrilife.org. We are also on Facebook at [Facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Rains-County-Family-Consumer-Sciences). Go and “Like” our page to keep up with the latest news, events, and programs offered by Family & Consumer Sciences in Rains County.

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