



Food Safety & Nutrition

How can I be sure I have safe colored eggs for Easter?



Sandra Brown

Food Safety and Nutrition Faculty

Eggs are frequently handled at Easter time and each handling occasion is one more chance that the eggs might come into contact with bacteria. The shell of an egg is very porous and will permit bacteria to penetrate.

- Hard cooked eggs are very perishable and cannot be left out of the refrigerator for more than 2 hours. This 2-hours is accumulated time – each time they are outside the refrigerator the clock is ticking.
- After cooking cool them quickly under cool running water. Refrigerate hard cooked eggs in their cartons if you won't be coloring them right after cooking. Assuming that after cooking the eggs, they are cooled properly they will keep up to 7 days in the refrigerator.
- After cooling, color and decorate them in any manner you wish. When they are decorated then return them to the refrigerator.
- If using decorated eggs in table decorations, be sure not to eat them. They are strictly for table decorations.

If using eggs for Easter egg hunts, leave them in the refrigerator up until the hunt and put back after the hunt. When hiding eggs, consider hiding places carefully. Avoid areas where the eggs might come into contact with dirt, pets, wild animals, birds, insects or lawn chemicals.

For more information contact WSU Extension at 360-397-6060.