

Support Fact Sheet for Sale of Shell Eggs to Grocery Stores and Restaurants
Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Dairy, Food and Meat Inspection Program
651-296-2627

Poultry producers who wish to sell shell eggs from their production to grocery stores, restaurants, boarding house and other food service institutions, must meet certain requirements relating to food safety prior to the sale. These requirements do not apply to the producer who sells eggs from their premises for direct sale to the ultimate consumer.

1. Eggs sold to grocery stores and restaurants must meet the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 29 and Minnesota Rules 1520. Copies of the statute and rules are available from the Revisor of Statutes web site at <http://www.revisor.leg.state.mn.us/> Basic compliance with these requirements include the following:
 - a. The eggs must be clean and cannot be cleaned by wet cleaning. A sandpaper block or other means of dry-cleaning is acceptable.
 - b. All eggs must be candled and graded either by the farmer or by the grocery store or restaurant that purchases the eggs. A handbook about shell eggs and candling and grading criteria is available on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) web site at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/poultry/resources/pypubs.htm#L3>
 - c. Eggs must be refrigerated at 45°F or less after grading and be maintained at that temperature during storage.
 - d. Containers (cartons, cases) of eggs must be labeled with the following mandatory information:
 1. Grade and size of the eggs.
 2. The name, address and zip code of the packer or distributor.
 3. A pack date in Julian calendar (day of the year) form. For example: The labeling of a grade A egg packed on June 1st will have a pack date of 152.
 4. A freshness date not to exceed 30 days from the date of pack. The freshness date must also have an explanation such as “exp.”, Best if used by or similar explanation. In the above example using June 1st as the pack date, the freshness date is July 1st.
 5. The safe handling instructions: “To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.”
2. Farmers who sell only eggs from their production are exempted from obtaining a food handler license. However, they must register with the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Meat, Poultry and Egg Inspection program at 651-297-7453.

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