

# Easter Egg Safety

**Colored Easter egg hunts have been a favorite children's activity for many years. Easter eggs can be fun and safe for everyone if a few simple guidelines are followed:**

- Inspect the eggs prior to purchasing them. Make sure they are not dirty or cracked. Dangerous bacteria may enter a cracked egg.
- Store eggs in their original carton in the refrigerator until you are ready to prepare them. Eggs tend to take on odors of foods around them, so try to store them away from foods with heavy odors (such as onions, fish, etc.)
- The *American Egg Board* recommends the following method for boiling the perfect Easter egg:
  - (1) Place eggs in a single layer in a saucepan.
  - (2) Add enough tap water to come at least 1 inch above the eggs.
  - (3) A tablespoon of vinegar can be added to allow better dye coverage after cooking.
  - (4) Cover the pan and quickly bring just to boiling. Turn off heat.
  - (5) If necessary, remove the pan from the burner to prevent further boiling.
  - (6) Let eggs stand, covered, in the hot water for 15 minutes.
  - (7) Immediately run cold water over eggs or place them in ice water until completely cooled.
  - (8) Refrigerate the eggs.
- Eggs should always be cooked well – regardless of the cooking method or style. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends cooking eggs until both the yolk and the white are firm, not runny. Cooking them this way destroys Salmonella and other harmful bacteria that may be in the eggs.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after handling eggs (and try not to handle them excessively while dying, hiding, etc.). The shell of an egg is very porous and can allow bacteria to penetrate to the inside.
- *HIDING THE EGGS:* Make sure to avoid areas where the eggs may come into contact with pets, wild animals, insects or lawn chemicals. *Some egg suppliers sell pre-cooked Easter eggs that are resin coated for extra protection against contamination and longer shelf life.*

## ***American Egg Board guidelines for Easter eggs:***

- (1) If you won't be coloring your eggs immediately after cooking them, store them in their cartons in the refrigerator. Then, after they have been hidden and found, refrigerate them again.
- (2) Don't eat cracked eggs or eggs that have been out of the refrigerator for more than two hours.
- (3) If you plan to use hard-cooked eggs as a centerpiece, cook extra eggs for eating and discard the ones that are left out of refrigeration for decoration.