



## **F**requently **A**sked **Q**uestions

### **Egg Quality:**

[How long can I keep my eggs in my refrigerator?](#)

[What is the white thing on my egg yolk? Is my egg fertilized?](#)

[What are the red spots on my egg yolk? Is it harmful? What causes it?](#)

[How can I tell if my eggs are fresh?](#)

### **Nutrition:**

[What is Lutein and how does it help you?](#)

[How do I get less cholesterol from an egg?](#)

[I have allergies, are eggs still safe to eat?](#)

### **General Egg Questions:**

[Why do I sometimes get green rings around my yolks when hard boiling?](#)

[How can I tell if my egg is raw or hard-boiled?](#)

[How much weight does a dozen eggs weigh?](#)

[Do you know where I can get pasteurized eggs?](#)

[Does Sparboe Farms practice any sustainability activities?](#)

### **Animal Care:**

[Are Sparboe hens vaccinated?](#)

[How are Sparboe hens cared for?](#)

[What is there a cost difference between regular and specialty eggs?](#)

[What do you feed your hens?](#)

[Are hormones or antibiotics given to your chickens?](#)

### **How long can I keep my eggs in my refrigerator?**

According to the American Egg Board (AEB), refrigerated raw shell eggs will keep without significant quality loss for about 4 to 5 weeks beyond the pack date or about 3 weeks after you bring them home. For longer storage, AEB recommends that you beat whole eggs just until blended, pour into freezer containers, seal the containers tightly, label with the number of eggs and the date. Once prepared this way, you can freeze eggs for up to 1 year. Eggs should be stored at a temperature between 33 and 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Eggs should not be left at room temperature longer than two hours, or in warm weather longer than one hour. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **What is the white thing on my egg yolk? Is my egg fertilized?**

The “white thing” on your egg is referred to as the Chalazae, a ropy strand of egg white, which anchors the yolk in the center of the thick white. Chalazae are not imperfections or beginning embryos. They also do not interfere with cooking or eating. Sparboe Farms does not produce any fertilized eggs. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **What are the red spots on my egg yolk? Is it harmful? What causes it?**

Blood spots are occasionally found on the egg yolk. These tiny spots are caused by the rupture of a blood vessel on the yolk surface during egg formation. An egg with a blood spot is still fit for consumption. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **How can I tell if my eggs are fresh?**

There are multiple ways of determining the freshness of an egg. Without cracking the egg open you can perform a “sink” test. Place an egg in a bowl of water, a fresh egg will have a smaller air cell and sink to the bottom. A semi-fresh egg will have a medium sized air cell and “stand” in the water (possibly bobbing up and down). An old egg will simply float due to its larger air cell. [\(back to top\)](#)

Another way to tell if an egg is fresh is to crack one open and examine the internal egg quality. As an egg ages the internal egg quality will deteriorate. If you crack an egg open on a flat surface, a fresh egg will have thick albumen (egg white) a rounded mostly centered yolk. The more the albumen spreads and the flatter the yolk the less fresh the egg. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **What is Lutein and how does it help you?**

Lutein (loo-teen) is a carotenoid, meaning a natural colorant or pigment, found in dark green leafy vegetables such as Spinach. Egg yolks are also a great source of Lutein. Lutein provides nutritional support for eyes and skin. It helps reduce the risk of macular degeneration of the eyes. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **How do I get less cholesterol from an egg?**

Cholesterol is found in the yolk of the egg. If you consume only the egg whites, there is no cholesterol. However, eliminating the yolks from your meal will also eliminate 45% of the egg’s protein and the majority of the egg’s vitamins. [\(back to top\)](#)

In 2010 the USDA published findings of a study that showed that eggs are 14% lower in cholesterol than previously thought. Now a large egg contains 185 mg of cholesterol, which means that for many people, eating an egg a day is ok. [\(back to top\)](#)

### **I have allergies, are eggs still safe to eat?**

Diagnosing food allergies is complex and must be done by a Doctor – some people are allergic to eggs. However, eggs are safe to eat for people with other food allergies. When the hen digests proteins in feed ingredients (corn, soy, wheat), digestive enzymes break down the proteins into individual amino acids. The amino acids are reassembled into new proteins in the liver and bear no resemblance to the proteins found in the feed. Thus, people with allergies to wheat gluten or soy can eat eggs without fear of an allergic reaction. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### Why do I sometimes get green rings around my yolks when hard boiling?

Color changes can occur when eggs are cooked for too long at too high a temperature or not cooled quickly enough causing the iron in the yolk to react with hydrogen sulfide from the albumen. Quick cooling in cold or ice water will prevent it from occurring. Green yolks may also occur when there are high levels of iron in the water you are using. Cooking at lower temperatures and using stainless steel pans will help to eliminate this from occurring. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### How can I tell if my egg is raw or hard-boiled?

Simply spin it. If the egg spins easily, it is hard-boiled. If it wobbles, it is raw. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### How much do a dozen eggs weigh?

Eggs are separated by size. Minimum weights per dozen are:

- Jumbo – 30 oz.
- Extra Large – 27 oz.
- Large – 24 oz.
- Medium – 21 oz.
- Small – 18 oz.
- Pee Wee – 15 oz.

[\(back to top\)](#)

#### Do you know where I can get pasteurized eggs?

Pasteurization is also known as a process called irradiation. During irradiation, foods are exposed briefly to a radiant energy source, such as gamma rays or an electron beam. Irradiation/pasteurization is not a substitute for proper food manufacturing and handling procedures. However, the process, especially when used to treat meat and poultry products, can kill harmful bacteria, greatly reducing potential hazards.

Sparboe Farms did look into the potential benefits of egg irradiation. However, due to the lack of customer demand and procedural cost we did not choose to pursue it any further. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### Does Sparboe Farms practice any sustainability activities?

Sparboe practices sustainability throughout the egg production process. Some examples include:

- *Production Facilities:* Sparboe's barns are designed to minimize our environmental footprint. Our barns are light in color and use energy efficient ventilations systems. Electric motors help power many of Sparboe Farms' machinery, minimizing the use of fossil fuels.
- *Feed:* Hens efficiently convert 2 lbs. of feed to produce 1 lb. of nutritious eggs. The feed comes from crops on local farm fields that are often fertilized with the manure byproduct from the hens.
- *Manure Production:* Chicken manure is sold to independent fertilizer dealers who then sell it to farms that apply it as animal nutrient fertilizer for their farmland. This manure is a valuable crop ground fertility agent.
- *Wash Water:* Egg wash water is recycled for land application as a fertility agent.
- *Recyclable Cartons:* Molded fiber egg cartons are made from reclaimed newspaper and paper products which, in turn, can also be recycled.
- *Egg Packing:* Wood pallets, shrink wrap, pulp products and cardboard cases used at Sparboe's plants are recycled. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### Are Sparboe hens vaccinated?

Sparboe Farms wants to provide its consumers with only the best – safe, quality eggs. In order to do so, the hens producing the eggs need to be healthy. Just as humans get vaccinated for potentially life threatening diseases, we do the same for our birds to prevent and protect them from illness and disease. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### How are Sparboe hens cared for?



Sparboe Farms cares for our hens under the United Egg Producers' UEP Certified program for animal care. This program was developed by a scientific advisory committee and is used by the majority of the egg industry in the United States. UEP Certified guidelines provide for the well-being of egg-laying hens and require participating farmers to provide:

- Code of conduct for proper animal handling signed by trained employees
  - Annual compliance audit conducted by independent third-party inspectors
  - Scientifically supported space for hens
  - Nutritious hormone-free feed, clean water and fresh air at all times and prohibits the use of feed withdrawal molt programs
  - Strict biosecurity measures to protect food safety and hen health
  - Space for nests and perches in cage-free houses

For more information about our animal care program, you can visit [www.uepcertified.com](http://www.uepcertified.com) [\(back to top\)](#)

#### Why is there a cost difference between regular and specialty eggs, like organic and cage-free eggs?

There are a variety of ways to raise hens and produce eggs. Each system has different costs. The main cost difference is in feed. As you know, organic eggs come from hens who only eat organic feed, which is more expensive than regular feed. Our cage free hens eat a diet that is enhanced with additional nutrients, like Omega 3 and lutein. Those extra nutrients increase the cost of feed. The At Sparboe, we want to provide consumers with choices. That's why we offer white, brown, cage-free and organic eggs. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### What do you feed your hens?

Feed for hens at Sparboe Farms is made from a variety of ingredients. The major ingredients are corn and soybean meal. A micro-mix supplies vitamins and trace minerals necessary for egg production and the hen's wellbeing.

All feed ingredients are approved by the Association of American Feed Control Officials and the FDA. Our feed ingredient quality control program ensures that the ingredients used in our feed meet specifications for quality and food safety. [\(back to top\)](#)

#### Are hormones or antibiotics given to your chickens?

Hormones are never been given to laying hens and are not approved by the FDA. [\(back to top\)](#)