

Food safety information for schools

Eggs and fresh produce

Disclaimer: This information has been developed for use by Fresh Tastes to provide advice to schools on the use of eggs and fresh produce. This information cannot be used or distributed for other purposes.

Public Health Officers are available during business hours to answer any questions in relation to food safety at schools, and can be contacted on 6205 1700.

General advice for egg and fresh produce use

- Collect eggs at least twice a day, especially in warm weather.
 - If you find a nest of eggs you didn't previously know about, throw them out.
 - Wipe eggs with a damp cloth to remove any large foreign matter from the shell.
 - Dispose of, or sanitise, the cloth after wiping eggs.
 - Wash hands thoroughly after collecting eggs.
- Do not wash or soak eggs.
 - Egg shell is porous and, when wet, *Salmonella* bacteria may enter the egg.
- Label each egg with the date it is collected. This allows eggs to be monitored and used in order of collection.
- Clean the chicken enclosure frequently to minimise build up of faecal matter.
- Store eggs at or below 5°C as soon as possible after collection and until use.
- Rotate eggs to ensure older eggs are used first.
- Use clean, uncracked eggs in food.
 - Dirty eggs are often covered with chicken faeces, which may contain *Salmonella* bacteria.
 - Cracks will allow the *Salmonella* bacteria to enter the egg.
- All eggs should be cooked thoroughly so both the yolk and white are firm.
- Do not use raw egg products or lightly cooked eggs. This is particularly important for young children who are more vulnerable to foodborne illness.
- Do not apply manure directly to fresh produce as this can contaminate fresh produce with bacteria and viruses.
- All fresh produce (e.g. fruit, vegetables and herbs) should be thoroughly washed prior to cooking or consumption.
- Wash hands thoroughly after collecting fresh produce.
- Grey water (e.g. waste water from hand basins and washing machines) must not be used on fruit/vegetable gardens. This is because grey water can contaminate fresh produce with bacteria, viruses or chemicals.

Cooking in the Classroom

Food made in classroom cooking sessions is not covered by the Food Act. This is because the food is not for sale or made by a registered food business. However, if unsafe food is used and someone gets sick, your organisation may be held responsible.

To ensure any food made in the classroom is safe and suitable for consumption, it is **strongly encouraged** that anyone handling food follow the food safety requirements for food businesses.

Can classrooms use eggs and produce grown at the school?

Yes – Eggs and produce grown at the school can be used in classrooms if the eggs/produce are safe and suitable.

General Requirements for School Canteens

All school canteens must register as a food businesses under the *Food Act 2001* and comply with all relevant food safety laws. Under the Food Act, when providing food, all food businesses must ensure they:

- sell safe and suitable food; and
- prevent food from being contaminated.

When handling, processing and cooking food it is important that school canteens have procedures in place to ensure compliance with the Food Act and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code. For example, the preparation of food using eggs produced at the school should be monitored to ensure that the food being produced is safe, suitable and free from contamination.

General Requirements for School Fetes & Fundraisers

School fetes and fundraisers are usually run by volunteers for a non-profit community organisation. In most circumstances, these groups are exempt from the Food Act unless they are selling food at a declared event. This means a P&C Association selling food at a school fete or other fundraiser does not need to register under the Food Act.

Despite not being covered by the Food Act, all organisations that serve and prepare food for the public must ensure safe food handling. If you sell unsafe food, your organisation may be held responsible.

FAQs

Are school canteens, fetes and fundraisers able to sell food made with eggs from chickens raised at the school?

Yes - Eggs from chickens raised at the school can be used in food sold by these organisations as long as the food sold is safe, suitable and free from contamination. For more information on food safety, refer to 'General advice for all egg and produce use' on page 2.

Are school canteens, fetes and fundraisers able to sell food made with produce grown in the school garden?

Yes - Produce (e.g. fruits, vegetables and herbs) from school gardens can be used in food for sale as long as the food is safe, suitable and free from contamination.

All produce being collected and prepared for sale by these organisations should be treated appropriately both after harvesting and during processing. All produce (e.g. fruit, vegetables and herbs) should be sold with the recommendation that it is thoroughly washed prior to cooking or consumption.

Can eggs and produce grown at the school be sold at school canteens, fetes and fundraisers?

Produce grown at the school can be sold at school fetes, fundraisers and the school canteen. **It is advised that canteens not sell raw eggs.** This is because canteens are captured by the Food Act and would be required to meet legislative requirements concerning the production and sale of eggs. These requirements would put significant obligations on canteens.

It is also advised that fetes and fundraisers not sell raw eggs. Fetes and fundraisers are exempt from the Food Act, however, if they sold raw eggs they would have to comply with the *Eggs (Labelling and Sale) Act 2001*. This legislation would put significant obligations on fetes and fundraisers.

Accessibility

If you have difficulty reading a standard printed document and would like an alternative format, please phone 13 22 81.



If English is not your first language and you need the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS), please call 13 14 50.

For further accessibility information, visit: www.health.act.gov.au/accessibility

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