

Gloucester City Council

Environmental Health Factsheet

SALMONELLA AND RAW EGGS - ADVICE FOR CATERERS

Environmental Health Officers nationwide have been asked by the Department of Health to remind caterers that they should continue to use PASTEURISED EGG, wherever possible, instead of RAW EGGS. This applies especially to recipes in which egg is uncooked, heated only very gently, or is only lightly cooked before it is eaten.

Recipes affected by this advice include:-

- * chocolate mousse
- * some other mousses and souffles
- * uncooked cheesecakes
- * home-made ice cream, mayonnaise and meringues
- * Tiramisu - recently very popular!
- * Hollandaise-type sauces

This latest guidance from DoH repeats warnings given by the Government's Chief Medical Officer several times since 1988 -

"that people should avoid eating raw eggs or uncooked foods made from them, and that vulnerable people such as the elderly, the sick, babies and pregnant women should eat only eggs which have been cooked until the white and yolk are solid."

To avoid any risk to vulnerable people caterers should consider using pasteurised egg for omelettes and scrambled egg. Soft boiled eggs and fried eggs cooked one side only MAY NOT be adequately cooked!



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

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New recommendations have now been made by the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food which include:-

- * eggs should be used within three weeks of laying
- * eggs should be labelled with a use-by-date
- * eggs should be stored at a temperature below 8 °C

The Government has endorsed these and other recommendations of the committee and is consulting the egg-packing industry and consumer organisations about their implementation.

The ADVICE given in this Factsheet does not constitute a legal requirement. However the Food Safety Act 1990 states that -

“In any proceedings for an offence it shall be a defence for the person charged to prove that he took all REASONABLE PRECAUTIONS and exercised all DUE DILIGENCE to avoid the commission of the offence”.

Caterers may therefore wish to take note of the advice given in this Factsheet in order to avoid a risk of selling food which may cause illness.