

INCLUDE EGGS IN THE WEEKLY FOOD BUDGET

To be sure your family is receiving its just allowance of this excellent body-building food, give eggs a definite place in the weekly food plan. Provide at least four eggs a week for each person in the family. Better yet, when the price is low or moderate and the combined consumption of meat, fish and eggs is not too high, use one egg a day for each person. When prices are high, allow one egg a day for each member of the family under sixteen and three or four a week for each adult.

On this basis, estimate the number of eggs required by your family each week. For a family of two adults and three children under 16 the weekly allowance should be 35 to 36 when eggs are low or moderate and 29 when eggs are high.

CHOOSE EGGS WISELY

Much of the popularity of eggs depends on their freshness and flavour. The quality, flavour and colour of eggs may be affected to a marked extent by the food of the hens. If they are allowed a free range of natural foods, there is a wide variation in the quality and flavour of the eggs. A fresh egg has a clean, dull shell. The air cell at the blunt end is small and non-movable. The white is firm and thick; the yolk is clear and holds its shape when separated from the white. Candling or rotating in front of a light shows the egg transparent. A large air cell, a watery white and a mottled, flat yolk are indications that the egg has lost its freshness.

Fortunately for the person who holds the purse strings, modern methods of egg storage will keep eggs in good condition for months. While they cannot then be classed as strictly fresh eggs, they can be used in a countless number of ways. Usually they command a lower price than new-laid eggs.

In buying eggs it is difficult to distinguish at a glance between desirable and undesirable quality. In Canada eggs are graded. If you buy your eggs, let these standards help you to choose them wisely.

CANADIAN STANDARD EGG GRADES

Grade A-1. There are three sizes, large, medium and pullet. The weight range is from 20 to 24 ozs. and up to the dozen. Eggs of this grade may be packed only by producers authorized by the Department of Agriculture. They are especially useful where eggs of the finest quality and flavour are desired, as for invalids.

Grade A. Clean eggs, sound in the shell; air cell less than $\frac{1}{4}$ " and graded as large, medium and pullet, weighing from 18 to 24 ozs. and up to the dozen. They may be used for any of the fine uses to which eggs are put, such as poaching and boiling.

Grade B. Reasonably clean eggs, sound in the shell; air cell less than $\frac{3}{8}$ " and known as large or medium, weighing 22 to 24 ozs. to the dozen. Eggs of this grade may be used for practically any purpose though the quality is not so reliable as that found in grade A. They are lower in price and in greater demand when eggs generally are high in price.

Grade C. All eggs fit for human consumption which because of inferior quality or lack of cleanliness or size cannot be placed in the higher grades. They are not recommended for the more particular uses to which eggs are put but are quite suitable for certain classes of cooking.

Cracked Eggs. They must be packed separately and marked as such.

For further information concerning grades, see Canadian Egg Grading Regulations.

STORE EGGS CAREFULLY

Cool eggs quickly after gathering and keep them cool. If purchased, store at once in a cool place. Eggs should be kept at a temperature of from 40 degrees to 50 degrees F. and away from odours. If kept in a warm place or near anything with a pronounced odour, they will lose moisture and change flavour quickly.

Wash eggs just before using. Left over whites may be kept covered in a cool place. Unbroken yolks will not harden if covered with cold water. When ready to use them pour the water off.

With care eggs may be preserved quite satisfactorily at home. Pack only fresh, clean, infertile eggs. Do not wash them before packing. Spring eggs seem to keep best.

Waterglass is a good preservative. It may be purchased at almost any drug or grocery store. Follow the directions on the package.

USE EGGS IN MANY WAYS

Few foods offer such scope for use in the diet as eggs. Use them often as the main dish of the meal, being careful to vary the methods of cooking and serving. Because of the quality of entangling and holding air when beaten, eggs are in great demand in lightening flour mixtures. They may be the sole means of leavening, as in sponge cakes and angel cakes, or may do a part of the work as in butter cakes and muffins. The egg white has a much greater ability to enclose air than the yolk with its high fat content; hence the warning to cooks to beware of any yolk clinging to the white when an egg is separated.

Eggs have a thickening power which is important in certain types of cookery. One whole egg, two yolks or two whites will thicken one cup of liquid. Remember that the method of cooking will affect the consistency of such an egg mixture. A stirred custard is not as thick as a baked custard. When eggs are reasonable in price, why not substitute them for some of the flour or cornstarch in a starch mixture? One egg yolk has the thickening power of one tablespoon of flour or half a tablespoon of cornstarch. When eggs are to be combined with a hot starch mixture pour the mixture over the beaten eggs, stirring carefully to keep a smooth consistency.

Eggs are also used to make an emulsion such as mayonnaise dressing; to prevent a granular texture in frozen mixtures; to coat food to be cooked in deep fat and to clarify soups and coffee.

COOK EGGS PROPERLY

Perhaps no other food is affected by improper cooking to such a degree as eggs whether cooked alone or in combination with other foods. High temperature toughens and hardens the egg proteins and makes the egg less delicate and palatable and digestion more difficult.

To ensure success, cook eggs and egg mixtures at a very moderate, even heat. This is particularly necessary for souffles, omelettes and sponge cakes. In these dishes eggs are used to lighten the mixture and only careful cooking will prevent a tough product which tends to fall when ready to serve. Custards or souffles bake at an even, moderate temperature when the dish containing them is placed in a pan of hot water in the oven. This is known as oven poaching. Serve egg dishes promptly.

TO SOFT-COOK EGGS IN THE SHELL

Put eggs in cold water, using enough to cover the eggs completely and bring the water to the boiling point. When water reaches boiling point, the eggs are soft-cooked. Leave them in a minute or two longer for medium cooked eggs.