Food Authority

Requirements for egg processors

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Overview

This factsheet outlines the requirements for businesses that process, pasteurise or manufacture:

- fresh liquid whole eggs, egg pulp, egg white (albumen), egg yolk
- frozen whole eggs, egg white, egg yolk
- dried whole eggs, egg white and egg yolk
- salted or sugared yolks
- scrambled egg mix
- hard boiled eggs.

Egg processors must:

- apply for a Food Authority licence online
- comply with relevant requirements of the NSW Food Regulation 2025 and the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code (the Code), including:
  - Part 1.2 Labelling and Other Information Requirements of the Code
  - Standard 2.2.2 Egg and Egg Products
  - Standard 3.2.1 Food Safety Programs
  - Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements
  - Standard 3.2.3 Food Premises and Equipment
  - Standard 4.2.5 Primary Production and Processing Standard for Eggs and Egg Product
- prepare for regular audits.

Implement a food safety program

Egg processors must implement a documented food safety program. A food safety program is a written document that shows a business has examined their food production activities and identified all potential food safety hazards. It outlines how these hazards are controlled and monitored, corrective actions, records to be kept and the process for regular review.

The Food Authority's generic food safety program template (Word, 429 KB) may be adapted to the business's requirements.

Minimum food safety program requirements

Approved supplier program

Egg processors must ensure they:

- only source whole eggs and egg products from reputable suppliers, that is, businesses with appropriate food safety and biosecurity safeguards in place. It is the processor's responsibility to determine criteria for approving and maintaining suppliers
- only accept eggs and egg products if they have been protected from the likelihood of contamination
- maintain a contact list of all suppliers, including the supplier's name and business address and the products they supply.

Suppliers should be listed in the business's food safety program.

Receiving cracked eggs or unpasteurised egg products

Product and/or air temperature records must be maintained for each delivery of cracked eggs or unpasteurised egg products using a thermometer or a continuous data logger.

Unpasteurised egg products (egg contents with the shell removed) must be received at ≤ 5°C, or if frozen, frozen hard solid. Cracked eggs should be received at < 7°C.

The following records must also be maintained:

- names and addresses of the people or businesses that supplied the foods
- dates the foods were purchased
- lot identification numbers of the foods purchased
- quantity of the foods purchased.

Other inputs

Egg processors should obtain documentation from suppliers of other inputs that have the potential to contaminate food, such as packaging materials, salt and sugar, are suitable for contact with food.

Cleaning and sanitation

Egg processors must implement a documented cleaning schedule that identifies:

- all fixtures, fittings and equipment used in the processing of egg products
- the frequency of cleaning
- how all fixtures, fittings and equipment are cleaned and sanitised
- how food contact surfaces and utensils are sanitised (where applicable)
- chemical usage (for example strength, contact times and temperature).

Sale and use of cracked eggs

Cracked eggs are eggs with a cracked shell, where a crack is visible or visible by candling, and includes a broken egg.

Cracked eggs must not be made available for retail sale or catering purposes (Standard 2.2.2 of the Code). Cracked eggs can **only** be sold to a business that is licensed with the Food Authority to manufacture, pasteurise or process egg products or mixtures.

These businesses must have a documented procedure for the handling of cracked eggs on their premises that outlines:

- how cracked eggs are identified (for example, clearly labelled as waste)
- the process used to segregate and dispose of cracked eggs (for example, hygienically and away from eggs intended for processing)
- the process to pasteurise cracked eggs
- details of any sales of cracked eggs to other licensed businesses.

Sale and processing of dirty eggs

Businesses licensed to separate egg products from dirty egg shells should use a process that:

- minimises contact between the outside of the shell and the egg product, and
- does not contaminate the egg product.

The egg product must then be pasteurised.

The business must have a documented procedure for handling dirty eggs on their premises. This procedure should outline:

- the process used to deal with dirty eggs, such as:
  - how egg contents are separated to minimise contact between the outside of the shell and the egg product (for example, automated or manual hand breaking of dirty eggs), or
  - discarding dirty eggs
- how dirty eggs are identified (for example, clearly labelled as waste), segregated and discarded hygienically, and away from eggs intended for processing.

Collection and storage of egg pulp

Businesses that collect the internal egg pulp (without added sugar or salt), must be licensed with the Food Authority to conduct this activity.

Pulp may be collected using different methods, such as centrifugation or 'gulping', mechanical separation or physical separation.

- Businesses that centrifuge or 'gulp' eggs must ensure the eggs are visibly clean, with faeces, soil and other matter removed, prior to the production of pulp.
- Eggs must be dry when pulped to prevent contamination of the liquid egg product from water droplets on the shell.
- Cracked eggs used for pulp must be stored under hygienic conditions at < 7°C prior to their use in the production of pulp.
- Unpasteurised pulp must be stored in a separate area to pasteurised pulp to prevent the risk of cross contamination or misidentification.
- Eggs broken in the process of final crack detection may be used for pulp if the controls above are in place to minimise microbial growth.
- Pulp must be stored under hygienic conditions at ≤ 5°C and sent for pasteurisation with minimum delay.

Processors licensed to collect and store pulp must have a documented procedure that outlines:

- the process used to collect and store pulp
- the process used to dispose of broken eggs
- how the pulp is labelled (for example, date of collection, quantity of pulp, and intended use of the pulp, such as 'waste or unpasteurised pulp to be processed').

The following records must be kept for pulp collection and storage:

- egg supplier details (if applicable)
- batch details of eggs used (for example, production date)
- date and quantity of pulp collected
- daily product and/or air temperatures to demonstrate that pulp is stored at ≤ 5°C
- calibration of temperature measuring devices (for example, thermometers, continuous data loggers or cool room gauges, which must be accessible and demonstrate accuracy of ± 1°C).

Use of egg products in food

Egg products with at least 80% egg white or yolk, or both, must not be used in food unless they have been pasteurised.

Businesses that pasteurise these products must be licensed with the Food Authority to conduct this activity and must comply with Standard 4.2.5, clause 21 of the Code and the pasteurisation equipment requirements specified in the NSW Food Safety Schemes Manual.

Businesses must also maintain a list of all the processed foods they produce that contain these pasteurised products.

Sale of egg products

The following records must be kept by egg processors that sell eggs and egg products by wholesale (business to business):

a. the supplier of the eggs or egg pulp

b. who the eggs or egg product was sold to.

If the business also sells whole shell eggs, individual eggs sold must be marked with a unique identification code – either the processor's or the producer's.

For egg products, each package or container containing the egg product must be marked with the processor's or the producer's unique identification.

Unpasteurised egg products

Egg processors that sell unpasteurised egg products in NSW must demonstrate that they are only sold to an egg business licensed to pasteurise these products by keeping a copy of the purchaser's current Food Authority licence.

The products must also be labelled with an advisory statement to the effect that they are unpasteurised, in accordance with the requirements of Standard 1.2.3 Information requirements - warning statements, advisory statements and declarations of the Code.

The following records must be kept for the sale of unpasteurised egg products:

- names and addresses of the people or businesses to whom the foods are sold
- dates the foods were sold
- lot identification numbers of the foods sold
- quantity of the foods sold.

Storage of eggs and egg products

Egg processors must maintain daily product and/or air temperature records using a thermometer or a continuous data logger. The business must be able to demonstrate that cracked eggs and egg products with at least 80% egg white or yolk, or both, are being stored and maintained in accordance with the requirements outlined in Table 1 on the following page, or if frozen, frozen solid.

Temperature measuring devices must be easily accessible and demonstrate accuracy of ± 1°C.

Table 1: Storage temperature requirements

Food	Storage temperature	Justification
Cracked eggs	<7°C	Australian Eggs Post-Grading Processes *Salmonella* unlikely to grow at < 7°C
Egg products with at least 80% egg white or egg yolk, or both Examples: fresh liquid whole eggs, egg white, egg yolk (pulp), scrambled egg mix, sugar and salted eggs, hard boiled eggs	≤ 5°C	Standard 3.2.2 of the Code
Dried egg products	Dry store (after processing)	*Salmonella* is unlikely to grow in dried egg products

Pasteurisation requirements

It is an offence to sell unpasteurised egg product (except to a business that will pasteurise it) and to use unpasteurised egg product in food preparation (Food Regulation 2025, sections 164 and 165).

Egg products, being whole or part egg contents with the shell removed, must be pasteurised in accordance with Standard 4.2.5 of the Code – these are outlined below in Table 2.

Businesses using a different heat treatment process time and temperature combination to those outlined in Table 2 must be able to show they have validated the process to ensure it achieves an equivalent outcome. The pasteurisation (or equivalent) process must be documented, and monitoring records must be maintained for each batch to ensure that the appropriate time and temperature combinations are reached.

The equipment used to pasteurise these products must also comply with the requirements specified in the NSW Food Safety Schemes Manual (outlined in Tables 3 and 4 below).

Table 2: Egg pasteurising requirements of Standard 4.2.5, clause 21

Egg product	Retention# temperature to be no less than (°C)	Retention# time to be no less than (minutes)	Maximum temperature to be immediately rapidly cooled to (°C)
Egg pulp (without any sugar or salt)	64°C	2.5 minutes	≤ 7°C
Liquid egg yolk	60°C	3.5 minutes	≤ 7°C
Liquid egg white	55°C	9.5 minutes	≤ 7°C

Retention time and temperature means the time required after the centre of the product achieves the specified pasteurisation temperature.

Table 3: Pasteurisation equipment requirements – continuous flow pasteurisers

Pasteurisation equipment requirements	Verification and validation
The equipment must include an indicating thermometer for product temperature at the end of the holding tube and for the cold product temperature.	Holding tube time must be (externally) validated every 5 years. The indicating thermometer must be compared with the continuous monitoring system each time the pasteuriser is operated (corrective action is required if the difference is more than 1°C). The indicating thermometers must be calibrated every 6 months (corrective action is required if the difference is more than 1°C).
The equipment must include a continuous recording device for the pasteurisation temperature, sterilisation temperature, cold product temperature, mode of diversion, and cleaning time and temperatures.	The following data must be continuously recorded each time the pasteuriser is operated: • pasteurising temperature • sterilising temperature • cold product temperature • mode of diversion device • cleaning time and temperatures. The recording thermometers must be calibrated every 6 months (corrective action is required if the difference is more than 1°C).
Raw, partially treated product and cleaning systems must not contaminate the pasteurised product.	Pasteurisers must be pressure tested annually. The diversion temperature must be challenged during start-up and recorded each time the pasteuriser is operated. The pasteuriser must be sterilised at a minimum of 80°C for 10 minutes during start-up (on the cold side) and recorded each time the pasteuriser is operated. Pressure differentials must be checked and recorded each time the pasteuriser is operated (either by manually recording the psi on the pressure gauges or by the computer system maintaining the pressure differentials)

Table 4: Pasteurisation equipment requirements – batch pasteurisers

Pasteurisation equipment requirements	Verification and validation
The equipment must include a hinged lid or removable cover and an agitator.	Vessel must be enclosed during pasteurisation.
The equipment must include a head space thermometer, an indicating thermometer for product temperature,	The following data must be recorded each time the pasteuriser is operated:

Pasteurisation equipment requirements	Verification and validation
and a continuous monitoring system for time and temperature (for example, data logger).	• continuous pasteurising temperature • headspace temperature at the beginning and the end of the critical temperature cycle • indicating thermometer compared with the continuous monitoring system (corrective action is required if the difference is more than 1°C) • pasteurised product cooling time and temperatures (in accordance with clause 7 of Standard 3.2.2 of the Food Standards Code). The indicating and recording thermometers must be calibrated every 6 months (corrective action is required if the difference is more than 1°C).
Raw, partially treated product and cleaning systems must not contaminate the pasteurised product.	Effective seals on valves and outlets.

Sampling and analyses

Product testing

Dried and pasteurised egg products with at least 80% egg white or yolk, or both, must be sampled and analysed in accordance with the NSW Food Safety Schemes Manual. The requirements are outlined in Table 5 below. Businesses that produce any of the products listed in Table 5 are required to conduct the corresponding microbiological tests at the prescribed frequency.

Microbiological testing must be conducted by a laboratory accredited by the National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) or International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC). Only tests for pH or environmental swabbing for *Listeria* may be conducted in-house, without NATA accreditation, using a validated method. Find NATA-accredited laboratories at nata.com.au.

Testing is per category and not for every product produced by a business. For example, businesses that pasteurise whole egg pulp, egg white pulp and egg yolk pulp are only required to analyse one of these products for *Salmonella* every 10 batches (as they are all in the same category).

Businesses that produce more than one product within a particular category must alternate the products sent for analysis to ensure that, over time, every product line manufactured is included in the testing regime. These are the Food Authority's minimum testing requirements needed to verify the effectiveness of a business's food safety program.

Water testing

Non-reticulated water used in the processing of the above products must also be tested in accordance with Table 5 below.

Treated water

Businesses that use a non-reticulated water supply and treat the water with chlorine or another suitable method must test this water daily for residual chlorine levels and maintain records of the water treatment.

Where chlorine is used, it is desirable to have at least 0.5 mg/L free chlorine residual in water coming from all taps used for drinking and food preparation to maintain effective disinfection throughout the supply system. Food safety officers will review monitoring records and test results.

More information on treating a non-reticulated water supply is in the NSW Private Water Supply Guidelines (PDF, 874 KB) published by NSW Health, or contact your local public health unit.

Recycled water

Food businesses wanting to use recycled water must apply to the Food Authority using the Apply for an alternative compliance method online form on the Food Authority website. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Testing failures

Egg processors must have a documented procedure to ensure that the Food Authority is notified verbally within 24 hours if any sample fails the standard specified in Table 5. This information should be directed to the Food Authority's helpline on 1300 552 406. Businesses will be referred to a food safety officer for advice on any action that needs to be taken.

Notification of any sample failures must also be made in writing within 48 hours of businesses being aware of the results, using the Food Authority's online Notify a pathogen detection form.

Table 5: Analyses of egg products, blended egg product mixtures* and water

What to test	Test to be conducted	Limit	Frequency
Pasteurised egg products Examples: fresh liquid or frozen whole eggs, egg white, egg yolk (i.e. pulp), hard boiled eggs	*Salmonella*	Not detected in 25g	Every 10 batches
Dried egg products Examples: dried whole eggs, egg white (albumen), egg yolk	*Salmonella*	Not detected in 25g	Every 20 batches
Pasteurised blended egg product mixtures* Examples: salted and sugared yolks, scrambled egg mix	*Salmonella*	Not detected in 25g	Every 10 batches
Non-reticulated water used in the processing of egg products or blended egg product mixtures*	*E. coli*	Not detected or less than 1cfu in 100ml	Not treated – every month Treated – every 6 months

* Blended egg product mixture is the terminology used in the Regulation to define a product consisting of at least 80% (by weight) egg white or yolk, or both, and other ingredients.

Labelling of egg products

Egg products for sale must comply with Part 1.2 Labelling and Other Information Requirements of the Code. The requirements depend on whether the food is packaged and how it is sold, for example by retail or wholesale.

Retail sales and sales to caterers

If egg products are sold packaged, directly to consumers or to caterers, the food must bear a label that provides important information, including name of the food, shelf life, lot identification, and relevant warning and advisory statements. For more information, see Labelling – general requirements fact sheet (PDF, 118 KB).

Wholesale (business to business) sales

If the food is sold in a package to another business (other than caterers), it needs to have a label that includes:

- name of food
- lot identification
- name and address of the supplier (unless supplier information is provided in accompanying documentation).

If they request it, purchasers must also be provided with any information relevant to compositional, labelling or declaration requirements.

More information

- NSW Food Safety Schemes Manual
- Visit www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au
- Contact the Food Authority helpline:
  - Phone 1300 552 406
  - Email food.contact@dpird.nsw.gov.au

For information on the Food Standards Code visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) website at www.foodstandards.gov.au