

# Requirements for small egg farms

*Information for farms producing no more than 240 eggs for sale in any week.*

Small egg farms need to meet the relevant requirements of the NSW Food Regulation 2025 and Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, including:

- Standard 3.2.2 Food Safety Practices and General Requirements – clause 4
- Standard 4.1.1 Primary Production and Processing Standards – Preliminary Provisions
- Standard 4.2.5 Primary Production and Processing Standard for Eggs and Egg Product.

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## Notify your business details

**Small egg farms must notify their business details to the NSW Food Authority.**

Farms producing **no more than 240 eggs** for sale in any week are **not** required to hold a NSW Food Authority licence but they do need to ‘notify’ their business details to the Food Authority.



Notification is free via the Food Authority’s online [food business notification form](#).

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## Food safety requirements

### Premises and equipment

**Small egg farms must ensure the areas where eggs are handled are fit for purpose and kept clean, sanitised (where necessary) and in good repair. This includes fixtures, fittings, equipment and vehicles.**

- Equipment that comes into contact with eggs must be cleaned often enough to ensure it is free from heavy soiling.
- The laying environment and areas where eggs are handled must be constructed and maintained in a way that minimises the entry of pests, including wild birds.
- Outside areas should be kept clean and tidy to minimise pests. This includes mowing or reducing excess grass or weeds, and removing rubbish and unused equipment.
- Any pest control chemicals used in areas where eggs are handed must be safe for use in a food premises. The supplier will provide this information.



## Waste disposal

**Small egg farms need to handle and dispose of waste in way that will not make the eggs unsafe to eat.**

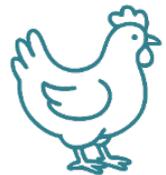
- Promptly remove dead birds from the laying environment and dispose of in a designated facility.
- Remove manure often enough to minimise cross-contamination between egg, bird and manure.
- Leaking eggs, or 'leakers' must not be sold for human consumption. They must be discarded hygienically and away from clean intact eggs.



## Stock food and water

**Birds producing eggs must not be fed any stock food that is likely to cause the eggs to be unsafe to eat.**

- Store stock food (and stock food ingredients) in a way that prevents contamination from pests and other materials, for example, in sealed food grade containers. Do not use non-food grade bins as these are not rodent proof and can transfer toxic chemicals to stockfeed.
- Keep records of feed suppliers and details of deliveries.
- When making feed mix feed in a clean, enclosed environment, away from wildlife.
- Regularly clean feeders and drinkers.
- Drinkers should be high enough to prevent fouling by birds and water must be from a clean, quality source, with no mould or algae.
- Discard any feed contaminated by rodents or wild birds.



## Skills and knowledge

**All egg producers and their workers need to have skills and knowledge in food safety and food hygiene.**

- No formal qualifications are required, and training should be appropriate to duties performed. For example, someone feeding chickens may have different skills and knowledge to the person who cleans eggs, but they both need to know their responsibilities and do their part to keep eggs safe to eat.
- Staff and visitors to the farm must apply good personal hygiene and health practices, such as:
  - wearing clean clothing
  - washing hands thoroughly using warm water and soap before handling eggs and whenever they are likely to be a source of contamination – for example, after using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, blowing their nose or eating
  - not handling eggs when they are sick.



## Crack detection

- **Selling cracked or broken eggs for human consumption is prohibited.**
- **All eggs intended for sale must undergo crack detection using candling or an equivalent method.**



Candling involves passing eggs through a bright light or concentrated beam to check for cracks. Visual crack detection without a backlight is not acceptable.

Cracked or broken eggs may only be sold to an egg processor licensed by the NSW Food Authority (farms should keep a copy of the purchaser's current Food Authority licence).

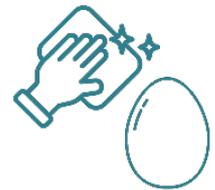
Otherwise, reject cracked and broken eggs and dispose of them hygienically and away from clean intact eggs.

## Dirty eggs

**Dirty eggs must not be sold for human consumption.**

Dirty eggs must be either:

- cleaned of visible faeces, soil or other matter from the shell
- sold to an egg processor licensed by the Food Authority
- discarded hygienically, away from clean intact eggs.



## Cleaning dirty eggs

Only visibly dirty eggs need to be cleaned. They should be cleaned with a dry cloth to remove visible faeces, soil or other matter from the shell. The cloth should be changed when dirty and cleaned and sanitised after use.

As the shells are porous, eggs must not become wet as it can draw surface contamination into the egg.

If visible faeces, soil or other matter cannot be removed by dry cleaning, the eggs must be segregated and either disposed of or sold to an egg processor licensed by the Food Authority.

## Bird health

**Eggs must not be sold for human consumption from birds that are:**

- **affected by a disease or a condition that makes eggs unsafe to eat**
- **administered a veterinary chemical product in contravention of the Stock Medicines Act 1989 or the Pesticides Act 1999.**
- Only use pesticides and veterinary medicines that are registered for use with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA).
- Use and store pesticides and veterinary medicines according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Observe relevant withholding periods to ensure eggs or meat produced does not contain illegal chemical residues.
- Any sick or injured birds should be segregated away from the flock with veterinary consultation as required.



## Egg stamping

**All eggs sold in NSW must be individually stamped with a unique identifier (usually a number or code) so they can be traced back to the farm.**

The Food Authority will supply a free manual egg stamp with a pre-assigned code, and one pack of ink refills, to small egg farms once their notification has been processed. Additional ink refills must be suitable for food.

Small egg farms producing less than 20 dozen (240) eggs per week are exempt from egg stamping requirements in NSW if they:

- sell those eggs direct from the farm gate, or
- use those eggs for a fundraising activity where the eggs will be cooked.



## Labelling

**Small egg farms need to comply with the labelling and other information requirements of the Food Standards Code.**

### Retail sales

Egg cartons for retail sale (sold directly to consumers) must be labelled with:

- the name of the food
- the business name and address
- lot identification (date marking may be used instead of the lot identification)
- date marking information, such as a best before date
- storage conditions and directions for use
- nutrient information panel
- country of origin.

For more information, see [Labelling laws](#). For industry best practice, see [Post-Grading Processes - Australian Eggs](#).

Re-using old egg cartons is a disease risk, as the bacteria on and within eggs can pass into the cardboard and contaminate the next set of eggs inside.

### Wholesale

Small egg farms that sell by wholesale (business to business), including to restaurants, grocery stores, butcher shops and other food businesses, need to provide the following with each delivery:

- the name of the food
- the small egg farm business name and address
- lot identification (date marking may be used in lieu of the lot identification).

The information required for retail sales above must also be available to purchasers on request.



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## Salmonella Enteritidis

All people working with poultry, from commercial producers to those with a few backyard chickens, have a role in helping to stop the spread of Salmonella Enteritidis.



*Salmonella* is a bacteria commonly found in animals, including poultry. It can cause illness to humans such as gastroenteritis (commonly known as 'gastro') when contaminated food is consumed.

One of the main ways it can be introduced onto farms is through the movement of contaminated people, for example, on their clothes or shoes. It can also be spread from farm to farm through the movement of vehicles, equipment and machinery, birds, eggs, manures, produce, feed and rodents.

Farms in NSW producing **more than** 20 dozen (240) eggs per week are required to comply with enforceable requirements to minimise food safety risks from *Salmonella* Enteritidis.

While small egg farms are exempt from these mandatory requirements, the guide [How to comply with Schedule 8 – control of \*Salmonella\* Enteritidis](#) (PDF, 2.8 MB) provides valuable information for all egg producers about on-farm biosecurity and food safety measures.

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## More information

- Visit [www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au](http://www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au)
- Contact the Food Authority helpline:
  - Email [food.contact@dpird.nsw.gov.au](mailto:food.contact@dpird.nsw.gov.au)
  - Phone 1300 552 406.

For information on the Food Standards Code, visit the Food Standards Australia New Zealand's (FSANZ) website at [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)

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## Small egg farm food safety checklist

The below table outlines best practice food safety procedures for small egg farms.

Table 1: Small egg farm food safety checklist

Procedure	Complete
<b>Laying environment</b>	
Premises (sheds/barns) tidy and in good repair. Three-metre buffer around sheds/barns free of debris and long grass.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment, including feeders, water storage, cages/nesting boxes, collection equipment & waste containers routinely cleaned and in good repair.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prevent entry of wild birds and vermin to sheds/barns, feed storage areas and water supply.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pesticides/veterinary medicines approved for use and administered and stored according to manufacturer's instructions.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures developed and followed for sick/dead birds, manure and leaking eggs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Grading room / area</b>	
Ceilings, floors and walls maintained smooth and impervious for easy cleaning.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doors, benches and cupboards free from damage and deterioration.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lights covered.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment and fittings free from rust, corrosion and peeling paint.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Operational hand wash basin is accessible, with warm water, soap and paper towel.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chemicals, cleaning equipment and packaging stored to prevent cross contamination.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Premises construction and stored materials not harbouring or allowing entry of pests/vermin.	<input type="checkbox"/>
External doors/openings prevent entry of pests. Flyscreens attached to windows.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Premises and equipment effectively cleaned and sanitised (where applicable).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procedures developed and followed for crack detection and cleaning dirty eggs.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Workers understand food safety risks and follow personal health and hygiene procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggs correctly labelled and stamped for traceability.	<input type="checkbox"/>