

How to **CLEAN EGGS**

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NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY

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How to Clean Eggs

Generally your egg buyer will pay you more money for clean eggs than for dirty eggs.

A few dirty eggs will often reduce the value of the entire case of eggs.

Most buyers do not have facilities for cleaning eggs, and must sell them as dirties at 5 to 15 cents a dozen. This loss is then reflected back to you as a producer in lower prices for your eggs.

You will get higher prices for your eggs if they are clean, regardless of whether or not they are bought on grade.

Estimates of a recent survey indicate 10 to 25 percent of all eggs are soiled at the time of gathering. Even though all the recommended practices for producing clean eggs are followed there is still an estimated 10 percent of soiled eggs among those gathered. This is according to a survey conducted by a North Central State egg marketing group.

Since it is recognized that a certain percentage of eggs are going to be dirties, even though all recommended practices for producing clean eggs are followed, the purpose of this circular is to point out and give some suggestions on HOW TO PRODUCE CLEAN EGGS and recommended METHODS OF CLEANING DIRTY EGGS.

Produce Clean Eggs

Dirty eggs, regardless of how they are cleaned, do not keep as well as clean eggs.

To produce a maximum of clean eggs adopt these henhouse practices:

1. Keep your hen house dry
2. Keep your nests and litter dry
3. Use community nests or allow one nest for each five hens
4. Use screened platforms under waterers
5. Enclose the roosting space with wire mesh
6. Keep hens confined—at least in wet weather
7. Don't let hens roost in nests
8. Gather eggs often—at least three times daily

Cleaning Dirty Eggs

Regardless of how eggs are cleaned, either dry cleaning or washing, cleaned eggs do not hold up in storage as well as clean eggs. This is especially true of washed eggs.

If you must clean eggs do it the least harmful way:

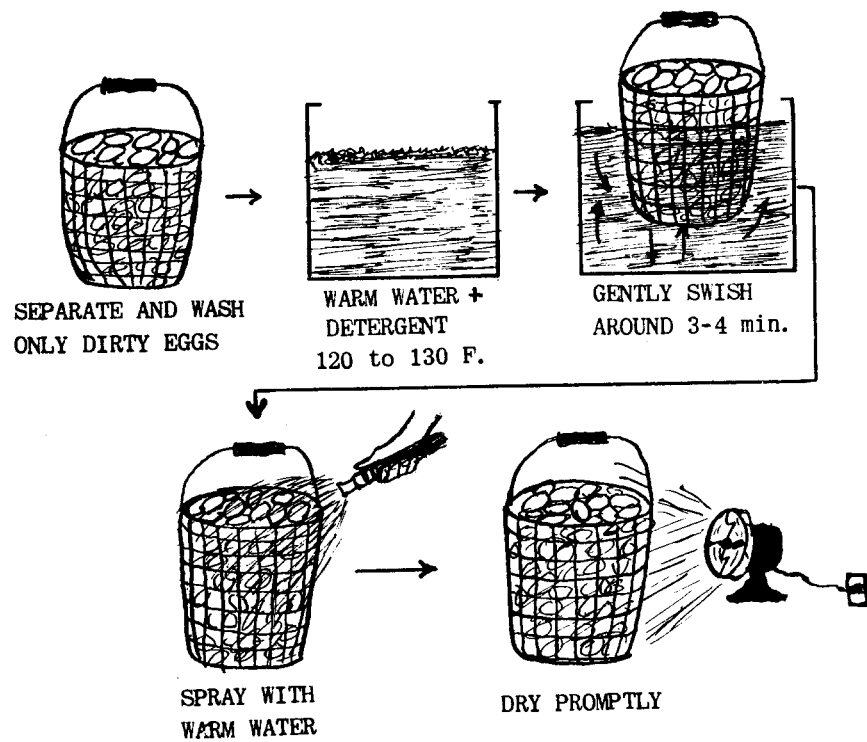
Dry Cleaning: This method of cleaning soiled eggs involves nothing more than a piece of steel wool, emery cloth or fine sandpaper which is used to remove the dirt spots. This method has been standard recommendation, especially for the small producer. A commercial "buffer" or "palm cleaner" may also be used.

Washing: Washing has always been discouraged by egg handlers. However, according to a recent experiment on egg washing, little or no difference could be found in keeping quality between washed and drycleaned eggs....IF the eggs were washed under proper conditions.

Research shows that it is the bacteria in the dirt on the egg that lower the quality. Poor washing methods can cause contamination. Eggs washed with a wet dirty cloth or in cold water are likely to be damaged. A wet cloth will smear the bacteria over the eggs. Washing an egg in cold water causes the insides of the egg to contract and draws the bacteria into the egg.

Recommended procedure for washing includes:

1. Separate the clean eggs from the dirty eggs. DO NOT wash clean eggs.
2. Place ONLY the dirty eggs into a wire basket.
3. Lower the basket into bucket containing water plus a soapless detergent (Vel, Dreft, Tide etc.)
4. The temperature of the water should be maintained at 120 to 130 degrees F.
5. Revolve the basket, while moving it up and down, for 3 to 4 MINUTES to clean the dirty eggs.
6. When the eggs are clean, remove the basket and rinse the eggs by spraying with warm clean water or by dipping them into another bucket of warm clean water.
7. Dry the eggs promptly and cool before packing into cases.



Cautions

- KEEP THE TEMPERATURE OF THE WATER HIGHER THAN THE TEMPERATURE OF THE EGGS...AT LEAST 120 DEGREES F. AND NOT MORE THAN 130 DEGREES F.
- REMOVE THE EGGS PROMPTLY AFTER 3 to 4 MINUTES, TO PREVENT PARTIAL COOKING.
- BE SURE TO SPRAY WITH WARM WATER.
- USE FRESH CLEAN WATER.
- USE A SOAPLESS DETERGENT WITH THE WATER.