



Food & Fitness



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

The whole month of May has been declared National Egg Month. Make a point to bring back eggs as part of your healthy diet. Remember eggs, always a bargain, are nutrient dense, low in calories and contain only a small amount of saturated fat. The latest scientific research shows that eating foods with cholesterol, such as eggs, does not significantly increase blood cholesterol levels in most people. The real culprit is saturated fat. So, if you are healthy and follow a low-fat diet, it's okay to enjoy eggs in your meals.

Here's an easy recipe from Mary Torell, promotion specialist, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, to get you started. For more free egg recipes, or information related to food safety and eggs, contact Mary at 402 - 472- 0752.

Besides being good-for-you, eggs are healthy for our economy. For example, did you know:

- Directly and indirectly, the Nebraska poultry industry supports 4,900 jobs that pay \$119 million in wages and salaries.
- Cash receipts from Nebraska's egg production in 1997 were \$107 million.
- In 1997, Nebraska produced 2,469 million eggs.
- Currently, Nebraska ranks 9th in the nation in egg production.

Variable Vegetable Strata

(Makes 4 Servings)

- Cooking spray
- 6 slices day-old bread
- 1 to 2 cups chopped cooked vegetables
- 1/2 cup (2 oz.) shredded reduced-fat Cheddar cheese
- 6 eggs
- 1 can (10.75 oz.) low-fat cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1/2 cup non-fat or low-fat (1%) milk
- 1 teaspoon prepared mustard
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon basil leaves, crushed
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

Evenly coat an 8 x 8 x 2-inch (or 2-quart rectangular) baking dish with cooking spray. Cut bread into 1/2-inch cubes. Evenly sprinkle half of the cubes into prepared dish. Sprinkle vegetables and cheese over cubes. Sprinkle with remaining cubes. In a medium bowl, beat together eggs, soup, milk and seasonings. Pour over bread-vegetable mixture. Cover. Refrigerate several hours or overnight. Bake in pre-heated 350 degree F oven until knife inserted near the center comes out clean and top is golden brown, about 50 to 60 minutes. (AH)

Focus on Food



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Q: How long should I cook eggs so they are safe?

A: Here are some guidelines from Mary Torell, promotion specialist, Nebraska Department of Agriculture on safely cooking eggs:

- Cook basic egg dishes until the whites are set and the yolks begin to thicken; they don't have to be hard.
- When making eggnog, ice cream, Hollandaise sauce and other recipes calling for raw eggs, cook the eggs or use a pasteurized egg product.
- Cook other dishes like French toast and Monte Cristo sandwiches, crab cakes, pasta dishes, quiches and casseroles until they're done at the center (160 degrees F).
- A baked custard is done when a metal knife inserted off center comes out clean. A stirred custard is done when it coats a metal spoon with a thin film and reaches at least 160 degrees F.

Q: Are the thick, ropey pieces of egg white safe to eat?

A: These are the "chalazae" and they are entirely edible, according to Mary. In fact, the more prominent the chalazae, the fresher the egg. These natural parts of the egg albumen do not interfere with the cooking or beating of the white and need not be removed, although some cooks like to strain them from stirred custard

Q: What if your recipe calls for eggs at room temperature? Shouldn't you keep eggs refrigerated?

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WIC (Women Infants and Children) celebrates 25 years

WIC has been shown to help pregnant women eat better, have healthier babies and receive early prenatal care. Infants born to WIC mothers weigh more and grow and develop better. Children on WIC eat foods with more iron and vitamin C, visit their doctors regularly and receive immunizations. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) provides free foods and nutrition information to help keep pregnant women, infants and children under five healthy and strong. Even working people may qualify for services. For example, a family of three earning \$486 a week will meet the income requirements. Fathers and foster parents may apply for WIC for their children.

WIC vouchers are for foods including milk, cheese, cereal, eggs, juice, beans or peanut butter. An extra food package is available for mothers who are breast-feeding. Although WIC supports breast-feeding, infant formula is available to mothers who choose to bottle-feed their babies. Infant cereals and juices are also provided. WIC provides

referrals to doctors, health centers and clinics, dentists and programs such as Food Stamps, ADC and Medicaid.

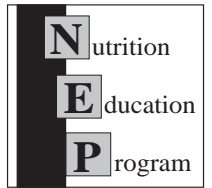
WIC services in Lincoln and Lancaster County are provided through Family Service and the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department. Currently, clients are being served at 17 sites throughout the county. WIC agencies in Lincoln have been working diligently to reach potential clients through extensive outreach. If you or someone you know may qualify for WIC, please call 441-8655 or 441-6200 for an appointment.

"The nutrition information I receive from WIC is very informative. I especially love the recipes."

"We have little money but want our children to eat nutritious meals. The WIC Program has helped us reduce what we spend at the grocery store"

"The WIC Program is perfect. It has been a lifesaver for my children."

"I want to express my appreciation for everything that the WIC Program has done. Each person involved deserves a pat on the back for the hand they have extended to help me to



Nutrition Education Program

for Limited Resource Families

Maureen Burson
Extension Educator

have the means to make it through the last three years of school in pursuit of a nursing degree. Once again, thank you for providing part of the meal set on the table so I could provide a better life for my child."

Submitted by Melissa Oerman, LLCHD WIC Director. (MB)



Tran My-Trang, WIC, and Barb Brodsky, NEP, team up at the Good Neighbor Center at 2617 Y.

The disappearing lunch hour

A USA Today poll showed that 55 percent of Americans use their lunch hour (which actually averages 36 minutes) to do other things than eat.

Unfortunately, missing lunch also means missing important nutrients. Plus, when the "hungries" hit, you're more likely to overeat on less nutritious food later on.

Here are some ideas to help you eat and get in your errands, too:

- If you know you're going to be running errands, try taking along a sack "lunch" that you can divide between a morning and afternoon break. For example, you might pack a couple of pieces of fruit, a carton of yogurt or cheese sticks, and a sandwich (eat half your sandwich at each break). If refrigeration isn't available, pack your lunch in an insulated lunch bag along with one of those gel freezer packs.

■ If lunchtime errands frequently arise unexpectedly, try keeping some nutritious munchies at work that you can eat in place of lunch. This might include little boxes of raisins, crackers, peanut butter, granola bars, cans or cartons of fruit and fruit juice, little boxes of pudding, etc.

■ If you do have a whole hour for lunch and usually go

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You CAN gain weight eating low fat foods!

Though there's a reduced-fat form of almost any food you can think of—overall, more Americans are gaining weight!

It's not the fault of the foods, however, but rather how we use them. For example:

■ There are still limits to how much food you can eat before you gain weight—even if the food is low-fat. If people load up on low-fat foods or eat

larger servings because a food is low-fat, chances are they're getting too many calories.

■ Low-fat or reduced-fat foods aren't always low in calories. Many of them may still be high in sugar.

According to a survey reported in *Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter*, while more than 50 percent of consumers read nutrition labels for

fat content, only 10 percent check the calorie level. Try this experiment the next time you're at the grocery store. Compare the calories in favorite lower fat foods and their full-fat counterparts.

Here's what Tufts nutritionists found when they compared calories between reduced-fat and full-fat versions of foods. The

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- 359 Avoid Choker Foods for Young Children
- 354 The Meat, Poultry, Fish and Dry Beans Group
- 357 Using the "Nutrition Facts" Section on Food Labels

and many more...

Nutrition and Food Safety Web Site

Visit our Internet web site at: www.lanco.unl.edu/food

FREE monthly Food Relections e-mail newsletter.

To be added to the mailing list, e-mail Alice Henneman at AHENNEMAN1@UNL.EDU

Diabetes Study Course

Call Alice Henneman (441-7180) for more information.