



Food & Fitness



Alice Henneman, RD, LMNT, Extension Educator

For an easy breakfast or brunch, this recipe may be egg-exactly for you. Eggs are a low-cost source of high quality protein. They're back in style since a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association (April 1999) showed eating an egg a day was OK for healthy people and didn't raise the risk of heart attacks.

For more free egg recipes, egg decorating tips or information related to eggs and food safety, please contact Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & Egg Division at mtorell2@unl.edu or call 472-0752.

Easter Bunny Bundles

- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons low fat milk
- 1/2 teaspoon margarine
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pita pocket
- Optional Toppings:** grated cheese, chopped tomato, chopped green peppers

In a small bowl, beat eggs with milk. Melt margarine in a skillet over medium heat. Pour in egg mixture and as eggs begin to cook, move it around the pan with a spatula, until it's firm, but still moist. Salt and pepper to taste. Cut pita bread in half and fill each half with cooked egg. Add toppings and serve warm.

(Serves 2)

Easter Egg Safety

Have a healthy, happy Easter with these tips from Mary Torell, Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Poultry & Egg Division.

- Inspect the eggs before purchasing them, making sure they are not dirty or cracked. Dangerous bacteria may enter a cracked egg. For perfect hard-cooked eggs for Easter egg dyeing, keep in mind the fresher the egg, the harder it is to peel. Try to buy your eggs a week or two in advance and refrigerate them.
- Make sure you wash your hands thoroughly with hot

soapy water and rinse them before handling the eggs when cooking, cooling, dyeing and hiding them. After hard cooking eggs, dye them and return them to the refrigerator. If eggs are to be eaten, use a food-safe coloring. Counting the TOTAL COMBINED time eggs are being dyed and the time they are out during an Easter egg hunt, they should not be out of refrigeration over TWO HOURS.

- Store dyed eggs in a clean container.
- If you're having an Easter egg

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herbs! Alice Henneman, extension educator and registered dietitian, will show you how to prepare delicious and nutritious foods using spices and herbs.

This class will be held as part of BryanLGH Medical Center's Wellness series at the Plaza Conference Center, Bryan LGH Medical Center East, 1600 S. 48 St., Lincoln. To register for this program, call BryanLGH at 481-8886.

Attend a FREE class on Healthy Cooking with Spices & Herbs on Thursday, March 20, 7-8:30 p.m. When cutting back on fat, sugar and salt, you can add zing to your foods with spices and

Cleaning the Kitchen Cupboard: Can This Food Be Saved? (Part 2)

This is part 2 of tips to help you decide whether to toss, move or try to save kitchen cupboard foods.

Spices and Herbs

- 1 year for herbs or ground spices.
- 2 years for whole spices.
- **Storage Tip #1:** Air, light, moisture and heat speed flavor and color loss of herbs and spices. Store in a tightly covered container in a dark place away from sunlight, such as inside a cupboard or drawer. For open spice rack storage, choose a site away from light, heat and moisture (avoid storage near the stove, dishwasher, microwave, refrigerator, sink or a heating vent). Never sprinkle directly from the container into a steaming pot.
- **Storage Tip #2:** Refrigerate paprika, chili powder and red pepper for best color retention, especially in summer or hotter climates.

Give Spices and Herbs the "Sniff" Test: As a check to see if a GROUND SPICE is potent, smell it. If its aroma is immediate, strong and spicy, it should still add flavor to your foods. For a WHOLE spice, such as a clove or cinnamon stick — break, crush or scrape the spice before you smell it. DO NOT smell PEPPER or CHILI POWDER as they can irritate your nose. For HERBS, crush a small amount in your hand and smell it. If the aroma is still fresh and pleasant, it can still flavor foods.

Brown Sugar

- 4 months to 6 months for maximum flavor.
- **Storage Tip:** It's VERY important to store brown sugar in an airtight container to retain its moisture and prevent it from becoming hard. Either store it in its original plastic bag, tightly closed, or transfer to an airtight container or a heavy moisture-proof plastic bag, such as a freezer bag.

To Soften Brown Sugar:
OVEN METHOD — heat the brown sugar in a 250 degrees F oven for a few minutes. Watch it carefully and as soon as it is soft, measure the amount you need. **MICROWAVE METHOD** — place brown sugar in a microwave-safe container and cover loosely with a clean, white, wet (but not dripping wet) paper towel. Microwave on high and check about every 30 seconds. *Warning using either method: sugar will be very hot. When the sugar cools, it will become hard again*

White Granulated Sugar

- 2 years
 - **Storage Tip:** Store sugar in an airtight container or a heavy moisture-proof plastic bag, such as a freezer bag. Properly stored sugar keeps indefinitely.
- To Soften Hardened White Sugar:** When white granulated sugar absorbs moisture, it becomes hard. Here are some possible suggestions for breaking up hard sugar: Put hard sugar in a sturdy food-quality

bag and pound it with a hammer, meat pounder or flat side of a meat mallet; smash smaller pieces with a mortar and pestle or break up in a spice grinder.

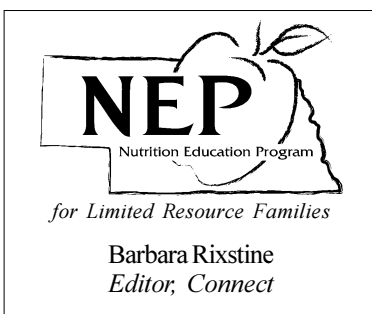
Vegetable Oil

- 1 month to 1 year; 6 months to 2 years unopened. Times vary according to type of oil, method of processing, etc. Some of the oils that may have a shorter storage life include walnut, sesame, hazelnut and almond oils.
- **Storage Tip #1:** Store in a tightly closed container in a cool, dark place.
- **Storage Tip #2:** Oil that has been stored too long will go rancid and develop an undesirable taste and odor. If you haven't used an oil for a while, smell it before using it in a recipe.
- **Storage Tip #3:** You can prolong the life of oils by storing them in the refrigerator. Some, such as olive oil, may become cloudy in the refrigerator but usually clear after sitting at room temperature to warm up.

Vinegar

- 2 years unopened, 1 year opened. White vinegar will maintain unchanged longer than other types of vinegar, according to the Vinegar Institute (www.versatilevinegar.org). The storage life of vinegar is "almost indefinite" because of its acidic nature, according to the Vinegar Institute.
- **Storage Tip:** Keep vinegar tightly covered.

Newcomers Learn Food Shopping Management, Healthy Nutrition



This article is reprinted from University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension "Connect," February 2003.

Grocery shopping, food preparation, even eating in America means changing some lifelong habits for many new residents of Lincoln and Omaha.

Newcomers can learn healthy food management on a limited budget through University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension's Nutrition Education Program (NEP), said Carrie Schneider-Miller, extension educator in Douglas/Sarpy counties. They are eager to learn, she said.

"They want to be healthier themselves and they want their kids to be healthier," Schneider-Miller said.

Schneider-Miller works



Extension Assistant Mary Abbott (center) teaches Sudanese women tips on how to feed their families.

largely with Omaha's Hispanic population, as well as some of the estimated 4,000 Sudanese who recently have immigrated to the city.

Maureen Burson, extension educator in Lancaster County, coordinates NEP for refugees from Russia, Bosnia, Kuwait, Iran and Iraq.

"They come here not knowing how Americans shop or how to obtain food assistance," Burson said. "We hook them up with these choices."

NEP is a no-charge, federally funded program that teaches overall nutrition and food safety. Topics include the Food Guide Pyramid, food money management, meal planning, food safety, healthy snacking, and feeding infants and children.

Schneider-Miller said many NEP participants are accustomed to daily market shopping because of the scarcity of storable foods in their homelands.

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