



# Keeping backyard chickens safely

Harmful bacteria like Salmonella can be found in chickens and the egg laying environment contaminated by their faeces. The following tips will help you and your family prevent food poisoning when keeping chickens in your backyard.



**Always wash your hands with soap** after handling eggs and chickens.



**Discard cracked and heavily soiled eggs.** Bacteria can get into cracked eggs and grow.



**Don't wash eggs** (Bacteria on the shell will get into the egg). Instead wipe off any visible dirt with a dry cloth or paper towel.



**Eggs should be collected daily** and inspected for cracks and cleanliness.



Store eggs in the refrigerator in a separate clean container away from ready to eat foods to **prevent cross-contamination.**



**Keep the nesting material and litter clean and dry.** Encourage nesting/laying off the ground.

## Tips to keep your chickens healthy and happy

- Buy chickens that have been vaccinated against poultry disease from reputable suppliers.
- Buy quality feed with the right nutritional balance from reputable suppliers.
- Provide adequate clean drinking water.
- Ensure their housing/coop is suitable, safe and secure.
- Get rid of any rats/mice as they can carry diseases.
- Look out for signs of stress and sickness in your chickens.

To learn more [about chicken health and husbandry](#)

## Approvals that you may need

It is important you contact your local government to discuss the requirements applicable to keeping chickens in residential areas. To find your local government go to: <https://walga.asn.au/>

## Can I sell my eggs?

If you plan to sell your eggs, the *WA Food Act 2008* requires you to [register as a food business](#) with your local government. It is illegal to sell eggs in WA without first being registered under the Food Act 2008. This includes selling eggs on the internet (e.g. Facebook, Gumtree).

Contact your local government for further information.

## Are chemicals in my backyard chickens?

If you are concerned about chemical and pesticide residue contamination in your backyard, you should consider testing the soil or eggs. For more information visit the [Department's website on Organochlorine pesticide residues in home garden soils](#)

## And remember... cook and handle eggs safely in your kitchen

Follow these tips to prevent food poisoning when cooking with eggs:

- **Always wash your hands with soap** after handling eggs.
- If the **recipe contains raw eggs** (for example: homemade mayo/aioli, hollandaise sauce, tiramisu, mousse, protein smoothies), **consider using pasteurised eggs** instead.
  - It is not recommended foods containing raw or lightly cooked eggs are eaten by young children, elderly people, pregnant women and people with a weakened immune system.
  - Keep food containing raw eggs refrigerated and if not eaten immediately, discard after 24 hours from when it was prepared.
- Cook eggs until whites and yolk are solid.

For more information on [how to safely handle and cook eggs](#)

## More information

For more information contact the Food Unit on 9222 2000 or email [foodsafety@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:foodsafety@health.wa.gov.au)



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