

CHAPTER V

Eggs

Eggs comprise one of the building foods. These foods must be included in every day's meal plan if the body is to be properly nourished. They are also used as a leavening agent, as in popovers and sponge cake, as well as a thickening agent, as in custards.

The yolk of the egg is rich in iron, phosphorus and vitamins, so it is a valuable food for children. It is sometimes better to use the egg yolks alone for children rather than whole eggs because of the greater food value found in that part.

In selecting eggs for use, clean ones should always be chosen, as the shell is porous, and if dirty, allows bacteria to enter the egg, thus making them of poor quality and unfit for use. Fresh eggs sink to the bottom when placed in a pan of water, while older eggs from which the water has evaporated will float. This loss of water comes thru the porosity of the shell. A better way to determine freshness of an egg is by candling. A covered box in which a light is placed, and with a hole in one side or end, may be used for this purpose. The hole in the box should be about the size of an egg. The egg is "candled" or tested by placing it over the hole so that the light shines thru it and the housewife may inspect the contents.

An egg is not fit for use if blood is formed around the germ, as this shows that incubation is pronounced. The white of the egg becomes watery with age, and for this reason the yolk often runs into the white on breaking.

The color of the shell in no way affects the food value of the egg, altho the market in certain localities may get a greater price for one than the other.

The quality of cold storage eggs depends more on the condition of the egg when put into storage than the length of time kept in cold storage. By federal law, the length of time eggs may be kept in cold storage is eight months.

All eggs should be washed just before using, as they are not washed before marketing because washing is detrimental to the keeping qualities of the egg.

EGG COOKERY:

Eggs are protein foods, all of which are better cooked below the boiling point. The white of egg begins to coagulate below the point of simmering, or about 160° F. If cooked at boiling temperature, 212°, it becomes tough and leathery. All food dishes containing eggs should be cooked at as low a temperature as possible.

Uses of Eggs: Some of the ways in which eggs may be served as a main dish are as follows:

1. Eggs combined with small amounts of meat, fish or vegetables—
 - a. Omelets
 - b. Souffles
 - c. Scrambled
2. Eggs combined with milk—
 - a. Scalloped eggs
 - b. Creamed on toast
 - c. Souffles
 - d. Scrambled
 - e. Custard
3. Eggs served alone—
 - a. Fried
 - b. Poached
 - c. Hard cooked and soft cooked
 - d. Deviled

Eggs are better cold when beaten. The whip egg beater produces a larger volume than the Dover egg beater, but with the latter the texture is finer. Egg white should not be beaten until ready for use as there is a tendency for the white to separate and this condition cannot be wholly overcome with additional beating. White of egg should be beaten so as to hold its shape, but not so dry that small pieces fly out of the bowl.

One teaspoon of baking powder is equal, as a leavening agent, to one whole egg or to two egg whites. This substitution may be made after a few experiments. Do not use

baking powder entirely to replace eggs, but choose those recipes which do not call for many eggs.

One tablespoon of flour or three-fourths of a tablespoon of cornstarch or four tablespoons finely crumbed bread are equal to one egg as a thickening agent. This substitution can be made in steamed custards.

PRESERVATION OF EGGS

Cover left-over egg yolk with cold water to prevent crust forming.

Cover egg whites closely and keep in refrigerator.

Water Glass: Select clean, fresh eggs and pack them in crocks, kegs or jars which have been thoroly scalded, or better, sterilized. Over these carefully packed eggs pour the following solution, which has been well mixed: 1 part water glass to 10 parts boiled soft water, which has been cooled. Store in cool place.

One gallon of water glass will make sufficient solution to cover 50 dozen eggs. It is not wise to use this mixture a second time.

Limewater: Limewater is used and may be made as follows: Three pounds of unslacked lime are placed in five gallons of water and allowed to stand until clear. The eggs, which have been packed in crocks or jars, as above, are then covered with the clear lime water. Eggs preserved in this way are sometimes apt to crack in boiling. This can be prevented by sticking a pin thru the shell into the air space at the end of the egg. It must be understood that eggs which have been packed in this manner must not be marketed as fresh eggs.

EGG RECIPES

SOFT COOKED EGGS

To one egg allow 1 pt. boiling water, and for four eggs, 1 quart. Pour the water over the eggs and allow them to stand in a warm place from 5 to 10 minutes, according to the consistency desired. The water should completely cover the eggs and the pan in which they are cooking should be covered.

HARD COOKED EGGS

Prepare the same as soft cooked, but allow them to stand 30 to 45 minutes, according to consistency desired.

FLUFFY OMELET

Separate carefully the yolks and whites of the chosen number of eggs and beat the yolks until very light. Add as many table-spoons of milk as you have eggs and enough salt and pepper for seasoning. Mix thoroly but lightly. Beat whites until light, but not dry. Fold lightly into yolk mixture until blended, but be careful not to release the air beaten into the eggs. Many cooks prefer to use water instead of milk.

Choose an iron or aluminum frying pan of such size that the mixture will cover it about one inch deep. Melt enough butter to coat the bottom. Cook at moderate temperature so that the air can expand before the egg becomes firm. If using a small oil burner, move the pan so that the omelet will cook around the edge at the same rate it does in the center. Cook until a spatula can be slipped under and the whole mixture loosened. Put in a hot baking oven for a few minutes until the top sets. Crease across the center with a spatula and fold omelet over in pan. Turn onto a hot platter and serve at once. If the omelet stands for any length of time after it is served it will shrink and be much less appetizing.

FRENCH OMELET

Allow an egg to each person and one additional. Break eggs into bowl and beat lightly. Add 1 tbsp. of milk or water for each egg used with salt and pepper to season. Have ready a hot iron skillet, which has been oiled with fat or butter. Be sure the sides are well oiled. Pour into this the egg mixture and allow to cook slowly by placing on a cooler part of the range or by reducing the flame of the gas or oil burner. With a spatula, lift the edge of the omelet and allow the liquid to run under. Continue this until the omelet becomes set. Place on top shelf of a hot oven or under a broiler for a few minutes. This will cause the omelet to rise greatly and brown. Have ready a hot platter. By means of a spatula, fold the omelet, slip on the hot platter and serve at once.

VARIATION IN SERVING OMELET

Before folding, spread with any of the following:

Meat omelet—Use chopped meat, such as ham.

Fish omelet—This may be substituted for meat.

Cheese omelet—Sprinkle with grated cheese before putting in the oven.

Tomato or Spanish omelet—Serve the omelet with a highly seasoned tomato sauce.

Jelly omelet—Spread the omelet with soft jelly before folding.

CODDLED EGGS

Drop the broken eggs into a vessel of water just under the boiling point. Cover and remove immediately from the heat.

Allow the eggs to cook slowly for about 8 minutes. These eggs have tender, jelly-like white and soft but sufficiently cooked yolk.

EGGS A LA SUISSE ON TOAST

In a flat pan set over hot water, melt 1 tbsp. butter. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ c. cream (or rich whole milk). Break 4 eggs, one at a time, on a wet saucer, and slip carefully into the hot cream. Sprinkle with salt and paprika. When partially set sprinkle with 2 tbsp. grated cheese. Cover and let stand until set. Serve each egg on a round of toast and pour surplus cream around them.

BAKED EGGS

Butter inside of earthen ramikins or custard cups. Into each slip an egg. Season with salt and pepper and set in warm oven until whites are firm.

EGGS IN NESTS

Materials needed: Eggs, custard cups or dry toast.

Separate very carefully the yolks and whites of the desired number of eggs. Beat whites stiff, but not dry, adding salt for seasoning.

(1) Place beaten whites in greased shallow ramikins or custard cups and in the center of each place the yolk of an egg. Set in a pan of water and bake slowly until firm, but tender. Serve at once.

(2) The beaten yolks may be arranged on slightly browned dry toast with a yolk in the center and browned slightly in oven. Use dry toast, because egg slips off buttered toast.