

## Eggnog Safety

### WHEN MAKING YOUR OWN, USE ONLY PASTEURIZED EGGS

Eggnog is a seasonal/holiday tradition in many households, and while it can be purchased commercially, some people prefer to make their own at home. Can you do so safely? For sure, but **use only pasteurized eggs when making eggnog**. Raw eggs can be contaminated with *Salmonella* bacteria, which can cause serious foodborne illness, especially among vulnerable populations (young children, the elderly, pregnant women, or those with weakened immune systems).

What about adding eggnog to hot coffee, or adding alcohol to eggnog? No, neither of these will render raw eggs safe (at least not completely). In the case of coffee, its temperature cools down rapidly when mixed with cold eggnog, so the heat may not be sufficient to destroy any *Salmonella* bacteria present. As for alcohol – well, that's complicated. While alcohol may have some antimicrobial effects, there are many factors involved, including pH level, the amount and type of alcohol, the presence of fats (such as from milk or cream), storage time under refrigeration, etc. Alcohol simply cannot be counted upon to kill all pathogenic bacteria.

In summary, to avoid the risk of illness, use only pasteurized eggs or egg products when making eggnog. These can be purchased at the grocery store, or you can pasteurize regular eggs by heating the eggnog base slowly until the mixture measures 160°F (procedure in the first link below). And of course, you can always purchase commercial eggnog, which has been made with pasteurized eggs.

*For further information on eggnog safety, see these publications:*

[https://extension.usu.edu/news\\_sections/home\\_family\\_and\\_food/safe-eggnog](https://extension.usu.edu/news_sections/home_family_and_food/safe-eggnog)

<https://news.ncsu.edu/2014/12/eggnog-food-safety/>

<https://extension.umn.edu/preserving-and-preparing/making-homemade-egg-nog>

*For further information on food preservation in general, visit the National Center for Home Food Preservation (NCHFP) at <https://nchfp.uga.edu> or contact your local Cooperative Extension office.*

Brought to you by the UCCE Master Food Preservers of El Dorado County

Website: [https://ucanr.edu/sites/mfp\\_of\\_cs/](https://ucanr.edu/sites/mfp_of_cs/)

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