California Shell Egg Regulation Quick Reference Guide

- California standards of quality for individual shell eggs are applicable only to eggs that are a product of domesticated chickens
- No eggs lower than Grade B shall be sold for human consumption
- Blood eggs are classified as inedible and cannot be sold for human consumption
- Eggs in the shell are exempt from standards established by these regulations when being transported
    1. From a location which does not have proper or adequate facilities for grading to a shell egg grading plant that does
    2. To the first point of grading
- Each container or sub container of processed shell eggs shall be marked with name, address, and zip code of the person or company by or for whom the eggs were graded and packed, the Julian packing date, the words "Keep Refrigerated" or the "safe handling instructions" language, and the UNABBREVIATED designation of one of the following sizes and grades:

  SIZE: Jumbo, Extra Large, Large, Medium, Small, Peewee

  GRADE: AA, A, B
- Processed eggs must be held under refrigeration in rooms kept at 45°F or below from the time of packing until sale to consumers
- Any advertisement, sign, or placard, which indicates the price of eggs for sale MUST also include the full designation of size and grade
- Superlative descriptions or other amplifications of grade or size are not permitted on containers (examples include "fancy" "Select" "Superior" "Premium" "giant" etc…)
- Descriptive terms such as "polyunsaturated" "higher in iodine" etc… must be approved by CDFA through laboratory analysis
- The terms "organic" or organically produced" are allowed only if the producer is licensed as an organic producer by CDFA
- Size, grade, name and address markings are not required on containers or sub containers:
    1. If sold at retail from a properly marked bulk display and packaged in presence of the purchaser
    2. If packed for shipment or in transit to points outside of California
    3. If sold to household consumers without advertising by the producer on the premises where produced, from a flock size of 500 hens or less
    4. If being delivered from outside of the state to dealers for candling and grading
    5. If being delivered to, or in possession of, a dealer for candling and grading
    6. If packed for sale to military forces of the USA, labeled with one of the accepted USDA grades

- Eggs labeled "fertile" must be at least 85% fertile
- Polyunsaturated eggs (to be so labeled and advertized) must contain at least 2% polyunsaturated fatty acids
- Properly labeled restricted eggs (checks and dirts) may be sold directly to consumers ONLY as follows:
    1. By a shell egg producer from his OWN flock's production, AT the site of production or segregation
    2. At secondary locations operated by the producer-packer for the primary purpose of shell-egg retail sales
    3. By a shell egg packer at the grading station where grading or segregation occurred. Proper labeling IS required
    4. Are sold to the final consumer for exclusive use by his or her household and nonpaying guests in quantities not to exceed 30-dozen per sale

- Inedible eggs (diffused blood, leakers, incubator rejects, rots, etc...) are unfit for human consumption and MUST be denatured, labeled and either disposed of or used for animal foods or industrial products only
- Any person engaged in business in California as a shell egg dealer (a person engaged in the business of producing, candling, grading, packing or otherwise preparing shell eggs, sale or distribution) **SHALL** register with the California Department of Food and Agriculture
- It is unlawful to make any false or misleading representation concerning quality, size, weight, conditions, source, origin, or any other matter relating to eggs
- It is unlawful for any person to sell to any retailer, consumer, or institutional consumer, any eggs which are ungraded as to quality, except under CDFA approval in cases of emergency only
- It is unlawful for any person to mark any eggs which were not produced in this state as "produced in California" or represent them in any manner to be a product of this state

Specific questions can be directed to

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