

California Shell Egg Food Safety Regulation Guidance

CA Department of Food and Agriculture

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To support the consumption of high quality, safe eggs, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) adopted a new Section 1350 (Shell Egg Food Safety) and amended Section 1354 (Product Labeling) of Title 3 of the California Code of Regulations. These regulations require any in-state or out-of-state egg producer or egg handler selling chicken eggs in California to implement *Salmonella enterica* serotype *Enteritidis* reduction measures and label products accordingly. These requirements were implemented in phases beginning on July 1, 2013.

Enhanced Salmonella Enteritidis (SE) Testing and Vaccination applies to:

- All flocks with 3,000 or more laying hens whose eggs are sold in California.
- Laying hens whose shell eggs are pasteurized or otherwise processed to reduce the risk of SE consistent with Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations (5 log reduction) are exempt.

California Shell Egg Food Safety Regulations Guidance Information

I. Environmental SE Tests (Title 3, Section 1350)

A. **Chick Papers:** While there may be various effective methods for environmental testing related to chicks being placed, the California Egg Safety rule requires that 10% of chick papers be tested for *Salmonella enteritidis* (one paper for every ten boxes of chicks). Check with the laboratory you use for SE testing to determine the best way to submit samples. Currently the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory is accepting three types of specimens:

1. Chick papers that are swabbed with pre-moistened (double strength skim milk or commercially available evaporated milk) 3x3 gauze pads at the farm after the chicks have been removed. One gauze pad is rubbed across the surface of the five papers and placed into a sterile plastic bag. After collection of up to 20 papers (four gauze pads pooled), add approximately 15-30 ml double strength skim milk. Continue this process until 10% of the total chick delivery has been sampled. Deliver samples to laboratory within 48 hours after collection. Samples may be frozen if unable to deliver to laboratory within 48 hours.

2. Portions of chick papers totaling 25 grams should be cut out using disinfected scissors or torn out with sterile gloves, pooled in a sterile container and delivered to the laboratory **from the farm.**

(Example: Farm receives 100,000 chicks. That is 1000 boxes. Farm must sample at least 10% of the total or 100 boxes. Five chick papers per swab would yield 20 total swabs. Those 20 swabs may be pooled into 5 bags of 4 swabs in each.)

3. Chick papers (one paper for every ten boxes of chicks) are removed at the farm and placed into a clean plastic trash bag and submitted to the laboratory within 48 hours of collection. Samples submitted by this method will be charged an additional processing fee and only samples from one producer will be set up per day (first come, first served unless special arrangements are made in advanced).



B. Pre-Depop SE Environmental Sampling: Should take place 2-4 days prior to the end of production or movement of flocks. It should include a minimum of 16 swabs per flock that can be pooled in four swabs per bag.

www.fda.gov/food/foodscienceresearch/laboratorymethods/ucm114716.htm

II. SE Vaccination Program (Title 3, Section 1350)

Regulation requires a minimum of two attenuated live vaccinations and one killed or inactivated vaccination or a demonstrated equivalent SE vaccination program approved by CDFA. Vaccines are available through livestock supply companies or directly through the manufacturer. Proof of regulatory compliance will be required for verification, including signed/initialed and dated documentation.

III. Reduced Stocking Density (Title 3 Section 1350)

A. Stocking density requirements apply to all chickens whose eggs are sold in California, regardless of flock size.

B. Requires a minimum floor space per hen dependent on the number of hens in the enclosure:

# Hens	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	>9
Sq. In/Hen	322	205	166	146	135	127	121	117	116

IV. California Product Labeling (Title 3 Section 1354)

A. Grade and Size Designation: Where eggs are not produced by the person whose name appears on the label, the name shall be qualified by a phrase that reveals the connection such person has with such eggs; such as, "Produced for _____", "Distributed by _____" or any other wording that expresses the facts.

B. The principal display panel for containers for all eggs sold in California must have the following statement: "California Shell Egg Food Safety Compliant" or "CA SEFS Compliant" or equivalent approved by CDFA. The Statement shall be legible and plainly marked on each container in letters not less than ¼ inch in height.

C. In order for CDFA to verify that eggs which are transported for sale in CA are CA SEFS Compliant eggs, we advise all pallet, nest run and case labels include CA SEFS Compliant statement and farm of origin identifying information. Additionally, it is required (Title 3 Section 1358.4) that all shipping invoices, bills of lading and/or shipping manifest should include the following information; CA SEFS compliant statement (or Not for sale California Consumption).

V. Segregation

CDFA strongly advises the implementation of a documented Segregation Plan as part of the SE Prevention Plan. In the event of an SE incident (including deficiencies in prevention measures found during audits), a documented and verifiable segregation plan should be in place, that explains procedures for how the affected eggs, in all phases of production, processing and transport, shall be segregated from CA Compliant eggs.