

Ohio Department of Agriculture
Division of Food Safety

Small Egg Processor Fact Sheet

What is a small egg operator?

A small egg operator is a person that is engaged in the operation of production who maintains annually five hundred or fewer birds and wishes the resulting eggs from a location other than from the premises where the eggs are produced.



Where may small egg processors sell their eggs?

Properly labeled eggs may be sold from your farm, from a registered farm market that you own/operate or a registered farm product auction without any inspection. To sell eggs to a retailer, restaurant or at a farmer's market, the processor must be inspected by the ODA Division of Food Safety to be considered an 'approved source'. NOTE: A small egg processor that is registered with the ODA must also license with their local health department to sell eggs at a farmer's market.

What does an inspection involve?

The ODA will come out to the farm and do an inspection to ensure that: the labeling requirements are being met, the eggs are maintained in refrigeration at an ambient temperature that does not exceed forty-five degrees Fahrenheit and, if the home is served by a private well, the well must be tested annually for coliform bacteria, having a negative test result within the past year. Proof of the well test result must be provided to the inspecting food safety specialist and annually upon renewal of the registration (test to accompany renewal application). Labels are to be available for review at the time of inspection.

Is there a registration fee?

No, a small egg processor is not assessed a fee from the ODA for the registration, but you will be issued a certificate of registration which may be presented to any interested party to support the approved source requirement. The registration must be renewed annually. There will be a fee assessed from the local health department if you wish to pursue sales at a farmer's market.

What are the requirements for labeling egg products?

A small egg processor is held to the same labeling requirements as a large egg processor. The requirements for carton labeling are as follows:



- The name and address of the operation
- An accurate statement of the quantity of the contents in terms of numerical count (12, one dozen, etc.)
- The date the shell eggs were packed into the egg carton
- Labeled "ungraded" or "unclassified"
- Labeled "mixed size"
- The safe handling statement (see below). This can be placed on the outside of the carton or on the inside of the carton lid.

SAFE HANDLING INSTRUCTIONS: To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly.

Cartons may be reused however all non-pertinent information must be defaced from the carton (i.e. original processor's name/address, any graded information, dates, etc.) The safe handling statement can remain intact. Reused cartons should be in sound condition and free from any visible dirt.