

New Government advice: British Lion eggs safe for mums-to-be, babies and elderly people

Pregnant women, babies and elderly people can now enjoy dippy eggs again for the first time since the 1980s – as long as they have the British Lion mark on.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has today (11 October 2017) [changed its advice on eggs](#), confirming that British Lion eggs are safe to be eaten runny, and even raw, by vulnerable groups such as infants, children, pregnant women and elderly people.

These groups can now enjoy the nutritional benefits of eggs, without having to fully cook them.

The new advice follows a year-long risk assessment by the Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Food and is the result of extensive food safety measures introduced within the British Lion Code of Practice since its launch in 1998.

Andrew Joret, chairman of the British Egg Industry Council, which runs the British Lion scheme, welcomed the new advice: “This is a real success story for the UK egg industry.

“Our producers have maintained the highest standards for two decades to ensure the superior safety of British Lion eggs and we are delighted that FSA has now confirmed that these eggs are safe enough for even vulnerable groups to eat runny or even raw.

“We know that the previous advice has deterred many women from eating eggs when pregnant, and from giving them to their babies, as well as denying older people the pleasure and nutritional benefits of a ‘dippy egg’ and home-made mousses and mayonnaise.

“The advice is particularly good news for these groups and will also enable care homes to put many traditional egg dishes back on their menus.”

Heather Hancock, Chairman of the Food Standards Agency, said: “It's good news that now even vulnerable groups can safely eat UK eggs without needing to hard-boil them, so long as they bear the British Lion mark. The FSA has thoroughly reviewed the scientific evidence about the safety of these eggs, and we're confident that we can now change our advice to consumers.

“The major reduction in the risk of salmonella in Lion eggs is testament to the work carried out by egg producers. The measures they've taken, from vaccination of hens through to improving hygiene on farms and better transportation, have dramatically reduced salmonella levels in UK hens.”

Dr Juliet Gray, registered nutritionist, said: “The new advice is very welcome news. Eggs are highly nutritious, containing many key nutrients including high quality protein, vitamin D, selenium, iodine, choline and omega-3 fatty acids. These nutrients are particularly

important for many vulnerable groups, including pregnant women, babies and elderly people and several of them are not found in many other foods.”

Notes to editors

- Since the salmonella scare in 1988 the government had advised that vulnerable groups, including pregnant women, young children and elderly people, should avoid eating eggs that have not been fully cooked.
- The British Egg Industry Council’s Lion Code of Practice was introduced in 1998 and has been acknowledged by Government as being responsible for the subsequent dramatic fall in human cases of salmonella.
- More than 90% of British eggs are now produced within the British Lion scheme, which requires producers to follow a stringent Code of Practice, including vaccinating their hens against salmonella, increased hygiene controls and salmonella testing, stamping a best-before date on the egg shell as well as on the box, and independent auditing.
- In November 2013, former Health Minister Edwina Currie, whose comments fuelled the salmonella scare, described British Lion eggs as the safest in the world.

For more information, please contact the British Egg Information Service on 020 7052 8899, Lucy Egerton on 07730 682111 or Kevin Coles on 07776 026 012