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**To:** **Consumers and General Public**

**From:** **Suzanne Condon, Associate Commissioner/Director**
**Bureau of Environmental Health**

**Date:** **August 25, 2010**

**Re:** **Advisory on Cooking of Shell Eggs**

**Boston, MA -** The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) is reminding the public of the importance of thoroughly cooking eggs and egg products to prevent food borne illness. This reminder is particularly important in light of the FDA recall on shell eggs involving a number of states. Federal and state officials are investigating a nationwide increase of *Salmonella* Enteritidis infections associated with shell eggs.

- **Outbreak:** Since May 2010, there has been a four-fold increase in the number of cases of *Salmonella* Enteritidis infections nationwide.

- **Source:** Preliminary investigations by federal and state officials suggest that shell eggs are the likely source of many of these infections. Two egg producers in Iowa have been identified as potential sources of contaminated eggs.

- **Recall:** FDA used the findings from its preliminary investigation to issue a nationwide egg recall associated with eggs produced at the facilities in Iowa. For up-to-date information about the recall, go to: http://www.fda.gov/Safety/Recalls/MajorProductRecalls/ucm223522.htm

- **Distribution:** MDPH has monitored the situation daily for new information that might affect Massachusetts consumers. As of August 24, no eggs being distributed in Massachusetts have been impacted by the recall.

**MDPH offers the Following Advice to Consumers on egg safety:**

- Eggs should be cooked until both the white and the yolk are firm. Eggs should be eaten promptly after cooking.
- Eggs should be kept refrigerated at ≤ 45° F (≤7° C) at all times.
- Discard cracked or dirty eggs.
- Wash hands, cooking utensils, and food preparation surfaces with soap and water after contact with raw eggs.
- While in use, do not keep eggs warm or at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Refrigerate unused eggs and/or egg-containing foods promptly.
- Do not eat raw eggs.
- Avoid restaurant dishes made with raw or undercooked, unpasteurized eggs. Restaurants should use pasteurized eggs in any recipe (such as Hollandaise sauce or Caesar salad dressing) that include raw eggs.
- Consumption of undercooked eggs should be avoided, especially by young children, elderly persons, and persons with weakened immune systems or debilitating illness.

See the following links for additional information about egg safety and the egg recall:

http://www.cdc.gov/print.do?url=http%3A//www.cdc.gov/salmonella/enteritidis

http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm077342.htm

http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/types/eggs/index.html

For more information, contact the MDPH Bureau of Environmental Health Food Protection Program at 617-983-6712.