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# MORE MONEY for Clean Eggs

By L. E. DAWSON

MICHIGAN STATE COLLEGE

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
SERVICE

EAST LANSING





# More Money for Clean Eggs

By L. E. DAWSON<sup>1</sup>

You can always sell clean eggs for more money than dirty eggs. A little extra care of your hens, plus a few simple steps discussed in this bulletin, may make the difference between pin-money or profit.

## WHAT IS A CLEAN EGG?

The egg-quality standards of the U. S. Department of Agriculture define a clean shell as one that is "free from foreign matter and from stains or discolorations that are readily visible." However, an egg that *looks* clean may still be covered with *germs* or *bacteria*. Bacteria multiply rapidly. For best keeping qualities, an egg must be visibly clean, and reasonably free from bacteria.

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Gather the eggs often to prevent breakage.





Provide plenty of nests with good, clean nesting material—about one nest to every 4 or 5 layers. Dirty nests cause dirty eggs. Clean nests help the eggs remain clean.

## HOW DO EGGS GET DIRTY?

The best poultrymen have learned that eggs get dirty because of failure to follow out some basic management practice. These are the most common causes.

### Damp, Dirty Litter

Hens that walk on dirty, wet litter before climbing into a nest get their feet dirty. Dirty feet mean dirty eggs.

### Dirty or Wet Nests

An egg is clean before it drops to the nest. If the nest is wet or dirty—the egg will be wet and dirty.

### Broken Eggs

One broken egg may mean 10 dirty eggs. Dried egg material is hard to remove.

At 60 cents a dozen, every broken egg costs *you* 5 cents!

### Improper Handling

Dirty hands or dirty containers mean dirty eggs.





Buffing with sandpaper.

## PRODUCING CLEAN EGGS

These simple steps will help to produce eggs that are clean.

### Dry Floors

A well-insulated building with good air movement is easier to keep dry.

Don't let the hens throw water on the litter. Provide a wire screen and a drain under each waterer.

Be sure your waterers and water pipes don't leak.

### Clean Nests

Give the hens plenty of clean nesting material and darkened nesting space. (1 sq. ft. for each 4 to 5 hens.) Gather the eggs often to prevent breakage. Keep the hens out of the nests at night, and clean droppings out of the nests whenever necessary.

Have a comfortable and efficient arrangement for brushing eggs by hand. Otherwise the tediousness of the job may lead to breakage that could be avoided.





## Handle Eggs Carefully

Clean your hands before gathering eggs, and then place the eggs in a clean container.

## CLEANING DIRTY EGGS

### DRY METHODS

Dry methods of cleaning are preferred for cleaning dirty eggs. These are some of the more common ones.

### Buffing by Hand

A sandpaper buffer or steel wool is used. The eggs have to be handled individually, and the dirt brushed off.

### Palm Sanders

Dirt can be readily rubbed off with a convenient cleaning pad which fits the palm of the hand. You don't have to lay it down to pick up each 2 or 4 eggs.

### Sanding Wheel

A small sanding disk attached to an electric motor speeds up the job of cleaning very dirty eggs. Care must be exercised to keep from breaking some of the eggs.

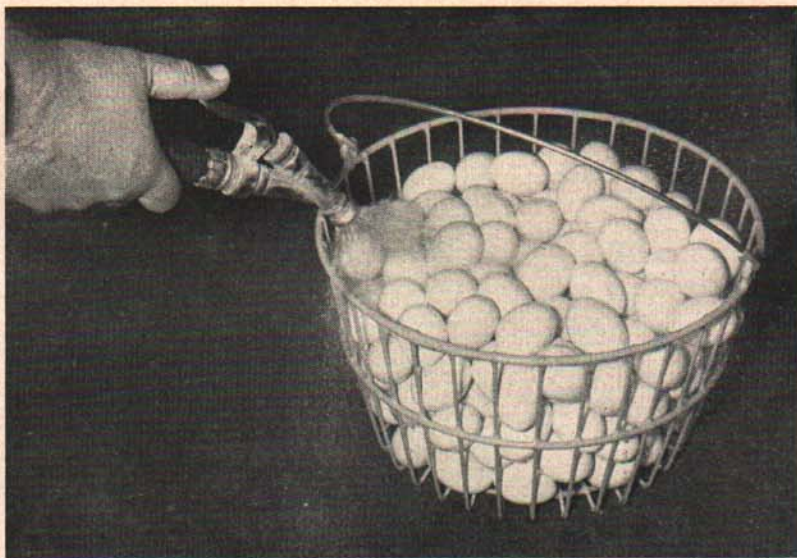
### Dry-Cleaning Machines

Several types of dry cleaning machines are available. Most of these machines remove the "bloom", or part of the outer surface of the shells. There is always the possibility that the eggshells may be excessively weakened.



"Soak and Spray"—an inexpensive method of cleaning dirty eggs. STEP ONE: Give the eggs a good soaking in warm water, 3 to 4 minutes.





**STEP TWO** of the "soak and spray" method: After a good soaking, spray with warm water.

### CLEANING EGGS BY WASHING

Washing eggs to clean them usually results in more bacterial spoilage. These are some of the advantages and disadvantages reported by poultrymen.

#### Reported Advantages

1. Saves labor
2. Cleaner eggs

#### Reported Disadvantages

1. Spreads bacteria
2. Promotes bacterial growth
3. More rots and sour eggs
4. Used as an excuse for poor management practices

Here are four principal methods for washing eggs, by hand or making use of the automatic machines available.

#### Damp Cloth

Wipe eggs with a clean damp cloth. See that they dry quickly.



### “Soak and Spray”

Soak the basket of eggs in a galvanized pail or tub for 3 to 4 minutes. Use only warm water (120° F.) with a detergent-sanitizer added. Move the basket while soaking. Spray eggs with *warm* water after the soak. *Dry the eggs immediately.*

### Immersion-type Automatic Machine

The washing water is heated by an immersion-type heater, and agitated by a pressure pump. Rinse the eggs (if necessary) with warm water, and *dry them immediately.*

### “Brush or Rub” Automatic Machine

The eggs move under a stream of hot water, and are then brushed or rubbed as they move around the machine. Best cleaning results are obtained when eggs are pre-soaked in a warm detergent-sanitizing solution.

A brush-type mechanical washer. Although automatic, pre-soaking is still advisable for best cleaning results.





Use a detergent-sanitizer when washing eggs. Follow the manufacturer's directions as to use; measure carefully.

### WASH EGGS RIGHT

1. Wash only dirty eggs.
2. Wash eggs soon after being laid.
3. *Maintain* water warmer than eggs (110° F.).
4. Use a detergent-sanitizer in water in the manner prescribed by the manufacturer.
5. Change water every day, or every 7 baskets.



6. Keep machine and equipment clean.
7. *Dry eggs immediately* after washing. Use a fan.
8. Case eggs in cool and dry fillers and flats.
9. Market eggs often.

*If you must wash eggs,  
do the job right!*

Immersion-type washer in use,  
after the detergent-sanitizer has  
been added to the warm water.

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