

St. Kitts and Nevis Egg Regulation

Classification, Packaging, and Sale of Eggs

Introduction

This regulation establishes rules for marketing eggs intended for human consumption in St. Kitts and Nevis. It is based on the European Union's Regulation (EC) No 589/2008 and the Codex Alimentarius Commission standards. The objective is to ensure transparency in egg quality and labelling and protect public health through clear definitions and standards for egg classification, packaging, and sale.

Background

Currently, there are no specific regulations in St. Kitts and Nevis regarding the classification, packaging, or sale of eggs. This regulation introduces basic but essential protections that consumers deserve and should have already been in place.

This regulation aims to establish comprehensive standards, guidelines and practices for the classification, packaging, and sale of eggs, aligning with international benchmarks such as the Codex Alimentarius Commission Standard and the European Union (EU) model. The Codex Alimentarius Commission, established by the FAO and WHO, provides internationally recognised standards to ensure food safety and quality. For eggs, these standards cover various aspects, including hygienic practices to prevent contamination, specific quality parameters like being free from cracks and maintaining freshness, and clear labelling requirements to inform consumers about the product, including the date of production, expiration date, and storage instructions. Similarly, the EU model includes stringent regulations for egg marketing, such as classifying eggs into different grades based on quality, detailed rules on labelling and packaging, and ensuring traceability to manage food safety issues and recalls. By adhering to these standards, consumers in St. Kitts and Nevis will have access to safer and higher-quality eggs, with proper labelling providing essential information for informed choices. Additionally, aligning with international standards can open up new markets for local producers, as their products will meet the quality criteria required for export. Implementing these standards will also help reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses associated with eggs, ensuring they are handled and stored properly throughout the supply chain. This regulation represents a significant step towards improving food safety and quality in St. Kitts and Nevis, benefiting both consumers and producers.

1 Scope

This regulation applies to:

- a) all eggs produced, imported, or sold in St. Kitts and Nevis, excluding eggs used in food processing industries,
- b) producers, packers, wholesalers, and retailers involved in the egg supply chain, and
- c) classification, grading, packaging, labelling, transportation, and retailing of eggs.

2 Terms and Definitions

For the purposes of this regulation, the following definitions shall apply:

2.1

air chamber

the air space inside the egg, which increases in size over time and is used as a criterion for freshness

2.2

best-before date

the date by which the eggs should be consumed for best quality, generally 28 days after laying

2.3

class A or grade A eggs (fresh eggs)

eggs that meet the highest quality standards for sale as fresh eggs

2.4

class B or grade B eggs

eggs that do not meet the quality criteria for Class A eggs but are still fit for industrial use (e.g., food processing)

2.5

eggs

means eggs in shell — other than broken, incubated or cooked eggs — that are produced by hens of the species *Gallus gallus* and are fit for direct human consumption or for the preparation of egg products

2.6

grading

the process of classifying eggs by quality and weight

2.7

packer

the establishment responsible for grading and packaging eggs

2.8

producer

the establishment where eggs are produced

2.9

sell-by date

the date by which the eggs should be sold, typically no more than 21 days after laying

3 Classification of Eggs

Eggs shall be classified into two main classes:

Class	Criteria
Class A Grade A	Eggs with clean, intact shells, an air chamber not exceeding 6 mm, clear and firm albumen, and yolk clearly visible when candled, with no foreign odors. They are suitable for sale as fresh eggs.
Class B Grade B	Eggs that do not meet the criteria for Class A but are still fit for human consumption in food processing. Class B eggs may have a larger air chamber (up to 9 mm), minor shell imperfections, or slight abnormalities in the yolk. These eggs shall not be sold directly to consumers but to industry.

4 Weight Grading for Class A Eggs

Class A eggs shall be further graded based on weight as follows:

Category	Weight
Very Large (XL)	73 g and above
Large (L)	63 g to < 73 g
Medium (M)	53 g to < 63 g
Small (S)	Less than 53 g

NOTE 1 Eggs shall be graded, marked and packed within 10 days of laying.

5 Labelling Requirements

Prepackaged eggs shall be in accordance with the Sro No. 35 - Bureau of Standards (Labelling of Goods) Regulations.

5.1 Class A or Grade A Eggs

Class A or Grade A Eggs shall be labelled with:

- the Class or Grade ("Class A" or "Grade A"), weight grade (XL, L, M, S), and "Best-before Date",
- the producer's or packer's registration number and the country of origin on the packaging, and
- the method of farming (e.g., Free-range, Barn, or Cage) indicated.

5.2 Class B or Grade B Eggs

Class B or Grade B Eggs shall be labelled:

- "Class B" or "Grade B" and may incorporate a statement that they are intended for food processing, not direct sale to consumers,

106 b) and include a "sell-by date".
107

108 **6 Packaging Requirements**

109 Egg packaging shall:

- 110 a) be strong enough to prevent damage during transport and handling,
111
- 112 b) be clean and free from any contamination,
113
- 114 c) clearly indicate the class and weight grade of the eggs, and
115
- 116 d) be sealed to prevent tampering.
117
- 118 e) Each package shall have a batch code and the packing date clearly marked.
119
- 120 f) Packaging shall state, "Keep Refrigerated" and "Use within 28 days of laying".

121 **7 Storage and Display Requirements**

122

123 **7.1 Temperature Control**

124 Eggs shall be stored and transported at a temperature:

- 125 a) not exceeding 18°C before reaching retail outlets, and
- 126 b) shall be refrigerated below 7°C at retail locations.

127 **7.2 Shelf Display**

128 When displayed on the shelf, the eggs shall be displayed:

- 129 a) in cool, dry, and shaded conditions, away from direct sunlight or heat sources, and
- 130 b) as Class A and/or Class B with their corresponding category, e.g. XL, L, etc.

131 NOTE 1: Class A/Grade A and Class B/Grade B eggs shall be separated during storage and
132 displayed as such to avoid confusion.

133 **7.3 Stock Rotation**

134 Retailers shall follow a strict stock rotation policy (FIFO - First In, First Out), ensuring that
135 older stock is sold first.

136 **8 Sales Conditions**

137 **8.1 Sale Period**

138 When selling eggs:

- 139 a) Eggs shall not be sold more than 21 days after laying, and
- 140 b) Eggs shall be removed from sale after the "sell-by date" and shall not be
- 141 repackaged or relabelled for further sale.

142 **8.2 Direct Sale to Consumers**

143 When selling eggs directly to the customer:

- 144 a) only Class A eggs shall be sold directly to consumers in retail outlets, and
- 145 b) class B eggs shall only be sold to food processing industries, not directly to the
- 146 public.

147 **9 Transport Conditions**

148 **9.1 General Transport**

149 Eggs shall be transported:

- 150 a) in clean, dry, and odour-free vehicles, and
- 151 b) the transportation temperature shall not exceed 18°C during route from the producer
- 152 to the retail outlet.

153 **9.2 Labelling During Transport**

154 Eggs being transported shall bear labels:

- 155 a) indicating their class, weight grade, and
- 156 b) the producer's or packer's identification.

157 **10 Traceability Requirements**

158 To ensure food safety, each batch of eggs shall be traceable from production to sale. The

159 following information shall be included:

- 160 a) farm of origin,
- 161 b) date of laying,

- 162 c) batch code,
- 163 d) packer and distributor details, and
- 164 e) packing date.

165 **11 Prohibited Practices**

166 **11.1 Washing and Cleaning**

167 Eggs sold as Class A shall not be washed or cleaned. Washing may damage the natural
168 cuticle and increase the risk of contamination.

169 **11.2 Repackaging**

170 Eggs that have passed their "Sell-by Date" shall not be repackaged for sale. Retailers shall
171 remove such eggs from sale.

172 **12 Penalties for Non-compliance**

173 Any person or entity found violating this regulation will face:

- 174 a) fines for improper labelling, handling, or sale of eggs,
- 175 b) seizure of eggs found to be non-compliant, and
- 176 c) suspension of licenses for repeat offenders.

177