

## Consuming Thoughts

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With all the children looking forward to participating in egg hunts, the Easter bunny needs lots of help to get all the eggs cooked properly and safely.

There are just a few simple rules to follow that will help you to make perfectly prepared hard-cooked eggs without cracking the shell. These eggs will be ideal for dyeing, whether you use a "home brew" or a commercial dye.

The secret begins with the cooking of the eggs. To prevent egg breakage while cooking, use eggs that are four or five days old. Be sure that they are at room temperature before cooking.

Place the eggs in a saucepan, in a single layer. Add tap water until the level is one inch above the eggs. Cover and bring to a boil.

Immediately turn off the heat and remove pan from the burner to prevent further boiling. Let stand, covered for 15-17 minutes for large eggs. Adjust time up or down three minutes for each size larger or smaller.

Some people prefer to bring the water to a boil first, lower the eggs into the pan, and simmer about 12 minutes until cooked. This method is not recommended because the sudden change in temperature may cause the shells to crack.

Specially designed appliances use steam to hard-cook eggs. These appliances may differ in procedure according to brand, so be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions. Eggs usually take 14-17 minutes to cook this way.

When removing eggs from the cooker be very careful. They are extremely hot and it is easy to burn your hands.

Frustration often occurs when egg shells don't pull off the egg without pulling some of the egg white with it. A University of Georgia study suggests a method designed to make peeling easier. The method calls for cooking the eggs as suggested and then plunging them into an ice water bath for a minute. Return eggs to a boiling bath for ten seconds before peeling. The ice water helps to shrink the membrane away from the shell, allowing the egg to be peeled more easily.

Transferring eggs to an ice water bath can also help prevent the green rings from forming around the yolks. Using a vegetable steamer or deep fry basket will make egg transfers easier.

Since fresh eggs can be tougher to peel, remember to use week-old eggs. When ready to peel, it helps to crack the egg shell all over by gently tapping it on a hard surface. Roll between your hands to loosen the shell and begin peeling at the large end. Dipping the egg in a cool water bath may help to ease the shell off.

Some people feel that salt added to the boiling water makes peeling easier, but there is no proof to this theory. If salt is used in cooking, pour water off as soon

as the eggs are done. Shells are porous and eggs can absorb the salt.

Keep your decorated hard-cooked eggs fresh for later use by storing them in the refrigerator as often as possible. A few hours out of refrigeration for the morning Easter egg hunt and later, for a centerpiece during Easter dinner won't hurt. But do put your eggs

back into the refrigerator with your Easter left-overs.

Hard-cooked eggs can be stored in the refrigerator about one week in their shells. The original egg carton is the best storage container for hard-cooked eggs.

By following these simple rules, your decorated Easter Eggs can be served as a safe nutritious post-Easter meal or snack.

## Farm Families

(Continued from Page B14)

land but return it." Farmers in Minnesota are caught in urban growth, Martin said, he was impressed that Pennsylvania is doing a good job with nutrient management. He believes Pennsylvania's approach to pollution control is more farmer friendly than in his state.

Like many of conferees attending AFGC, Martin would have preferred to see fields without snow cover.

"But I can tell by the forages

there are many excellent farmers in the area," he said. He was impressed by reading the hay market reports and the amount of hay sold over the auctions.

The Martins enjoyed visiting a local Mennonite church with their host family. They were surprised by many similarities in their faith and in their homes.

There was one big difference, Mary Ann noted, "The Nissleys didn't have a television. But we didn't even miss it because we were so busy talking."

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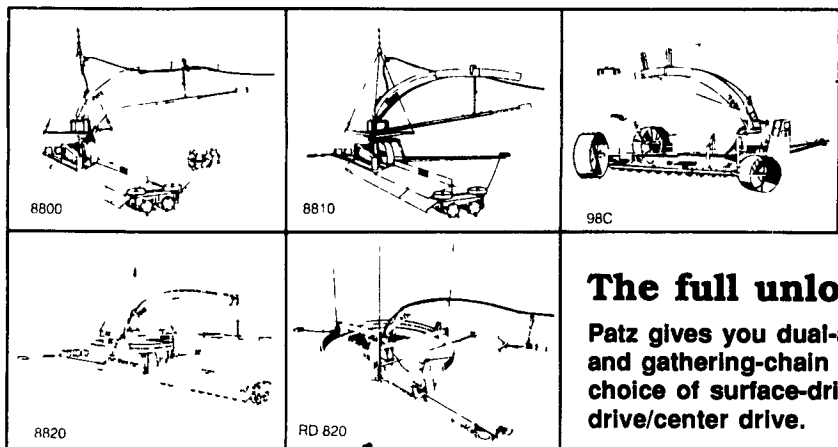
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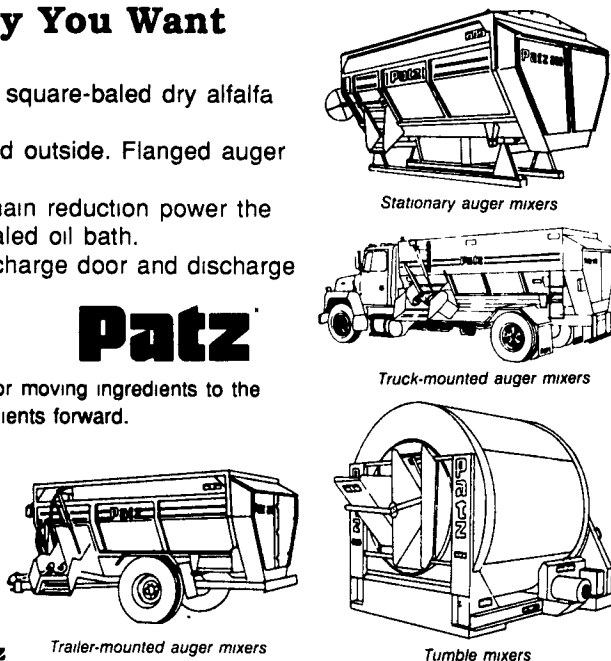
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