

◆◆◆ Food Safety ◆◆◆

HELPFUL HINTS FROM EXPERTS

How Sweet It Is, But Make It Safe

(NAPS)—If you want your homemade desserts to serve as happy endings at your next family meal, remember this food safety tip: Beware of BAC.

Food safety experts at the USDA consider BAC, or bacteria, to be the “invisible enemy.” That’s because you can’t smell, see or taste bacteria, but it is often on food. BAC multiplies quickly in warm, moist environments and if consumed, it can cause foodborne illness.

So what can dessert-makers do to avoid BAC? Be eggs-tra cautious. Many desserts call for uncooked or lightly cooked eggs. Remember that even Grade A eggs with clean, uncracked shells can be contaminated with salmonella bacteria. Be sure to:

- Avoid licking the spoon or bowl used to make cookie dough or batters.
- Always use recipes that call for thoroughly cooked eggs, never raw ones.

Fortunately, cooked eggs won’t ruin the taste of your dessert. For example, you can make rich and fluffy chocolate mocha mousse (a recipe that usually involves raw eggs) safer by cooking the eggs right in the chocolate mixture:

- In a pan, melt the chocolate with the amount of liquid your particular recipe calls for.



Kids should never lick a spoon used in a cookie dough or batter made with raw eggs.

- Add the eggs to the mixture. Continue to gently heat the mixture until it reaches the safe temperature of 160°.
- When you’ve added all the ingredients, cool the mixture quickly by setting the pan in a bowl of cold water.
- Stir mixture occasionally for about 10 minutes. Then continue to follow the rest of your recipe instructions.

For more food safety tips and ways to replace raw eggs with cooked eggs in recipes, visit www.fsis.usda.gov or call USDA’s Meat and Poultry Hotline at 1-800-535-4555 or TTY at 1-800-256-7072.