

## How Sweet It Is, But Make It Egg-stra Safe

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.



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

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. See below:

### *Custard or Cream Pies:*

A luscious creamy custard pie is a perfect present. When preparing your surprise, keep these food safety tips in mind:



*Option #1:* Cook the egg mixture for custard or cream pie fillings on the stovetop to 160° F. Then follow the recipe's directions.

*Option #2:* If baked in a pie shell from scratch, be sure the filling reaches 160° F.

### *For Chocolate Mousse:*

- \* In a pan, melt the chocolate with the amount of liquid your particular recipe calls for.
- \* Add the eggs to the mixture. Continue to gently heat the mixture until it reaches the safe temperature of 160° F.
- \* 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.

**Note:** Bacteria can multiply quickly in moist desserts that contain dairy products, so remember the 2-Hour Rule: Don't leave perishables out at room temperature for more than 2 hours. If you're not serving cream pies right away, refrigerate them.

For more food safety tips, call Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County's FoodLine at: (607) 272-2292, or visit [www.fsis.usda.gov](http://www.fsis.usda.gov).