

7.1: Eggs Grade

Fresh hen eggs are sold by grade in all provinces. All shell eggs that are imported, exported, or shipped from one province to another for commercial sale must be graded. In Canada, it is mandatory to have all eggs graded by the standards set by Agriculture and Agri-Foods Canada (AAFC). The grade name appears on cartons. The grades Canada A and Canada B bear the maple leaf symbol with the grade name inside, and Canada C and Nest Run eggs will have the grade name printed in block text. The grades indicate the quality of the egg and should not be confused with size. Only Canada A are available in different sizes. The average large size egg weighs about 56 g (2 oz.) as indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Canada Grade A egg sizes

Size	Weight (including shell)
Peewee	Less than 42 g (1.5 oz.)
Small	At least 42 g (1.5 oz.)
Medium	At least 49 g (1.75 oz.)
Large	At least 56 g (2 oz.)
Extra Large	At least 63 g (2.25 oz.)
Jumbo	70 g (2.5 oz.) or more

The Canada grade symbol does not guarantee that the eggs are of Canadian origin, but it does guarantee that the products meet Canadian government standards. Agriculture Canada inspects all egg-processing plants to ensure that the products are wholesome and processed according to sanitary standards. The pasteurization of “packaged” egg product is also monitored.

The criteria for grading eggs are:

- Weight
- Cleanliness
- Soundness and shape of shell
- Shape and relative position of yolk within the egg
- Size of air cell free of abnormalities
- Freedom from dissolved yolk and blood spots

Canada A

Canada A eggs are clean, normal in shape with sound shells, and have the finest interior quality. They are ideal for all uses. The yolks are round and compact and surrounded by very thick, firm albumen. Canada A eggs are a premium quality and in limited supply on the retail market. If eggs are not sold within a limited time, unsold stocks are returned to the supplier. Eggs graded as A must meet the minimum weight for the declared size (see Table 12.) The size designation for Canada A eggs must appear on the label.

Canada B

Canada B eggs have very slight abnormalities. This grade is fine for baking, where appearance is not important. These eggs must weigh at least 49 g (1.75 oz.). There are no size designations on the label for Canada B eggs.

Canada C

Canada C is considered a processing grade and provides a safe outlet for the disposition of cracked eggs. Canada C eggs must be shipped to a federally registered processed egg station and pasteurized as a means of controlling the higher risk of salmonella or other microbial contamination that may be found in cracked eggs.

These eggs are suitable for processing into commercially frozen, liquid, and dried egg products. Sizes are not specified.

Canada Nest Run

Since Canada Nest Run eggs are generally sent for further processing, they are usually not washed, candled (a process discussed later in this chapter), or sized. However, nest run eggs must meet the minimum quality requirements prescribed by the egg regulations. This grade, as with other Canada grades, can only be applied to eggs in a federally registered egg station.

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