

Cheat Sheet: Unscrambling the Egg Aisle

Label Indication	Characteristic	Details	Are there Differences in nutritional value?
Color of the Eggshell	Brown eggs	Typically laid by chickens with reddish-brown feathers and red earlobes	Tend to cost more than white-shell eggs but nutritional value is the same
	White eggs	Typically laid by chickens with white feathers and white earlobes	Same as brown-shell eggs
Type of housing provided to the chickens who laid the eggs	Free-range	<u>USDA definition</u> : Come from birds that are allowed to roam freely both indoors and outdoors during the egg-laying cycle (must be allowed to live as naturally as possible)	Increase in omega-3 fatty acids levels in eggs produced on the range
	Cage-free	<u>USDA definition</u> : Produced by hens roaming freely but typically living in chicken houses (housing must allow the birds the space to move around easily)	No known nutritional variations
	Pasture-raised	An unregulated term with no legal meaning; producers advertise this to say that the chickens who laid these eggs spent most of their time in free-roaming pasture	
Organic vs. Non-organic	Organic	<u>USDA definition</u> : Come from chickens fed foods free of pesticides, herbicides, and commercial fertilizers; hens must also have access to the outdoors year-round	Chickens fed foods rich in omega-3 fatty acids lay eggs with higher amounts of omega-3 fatty acids (will be labeled “enriched with omega-3 fatty acids”)
Grade	AA	<u>USDA definition</u> : based Quality standards	Best quality
	A		Better quality
	B		Egg grade has nothing to do with the nutritional properties, but rather the physical properties of the egg once it is cracked. B grade eggs are a good choice for making hard-boiled egg, scrambling, baking, or use as an ingredient. This type of egg is usually used as an ingredient or in egg products because the whites and yolks are not as high in quality as A or AA eggs.