

Seasonal Eating
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Saving Money While Egg Prices Skyrocket
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Eggs used to be the cheap source of protein – but not anymore. With the avian flu causing a huge increase in the price and decreasing the availability of eggs, we tend to think twice before whipping up a quiche or omelet for dinner or baking with lots of eggs.

While eggs are still a great low-fat, low-calorie source of protein and nutrients, we can incorporate them into the essentials while stretching or substituting for them in other dishes.

In baking, eggs serve several purposes. In some recipes they serve as a leavening, trapping air pockets to make the item rise – think whipped egg whites in angel food or chiffon cake. Other times they are a binder that holds the item together – think drop cookies. They also add moisture and contribute to color and browning. Sometimes they serve all of these purposes in a recipe.



It is easier to substitute for fewer eggs. When substituting, look for a substitute that performs the same function, like leavening, binding or both. Keep in mind too that some recipes, such as pound cakes, sponge cakes and angel food cakes, just do not turn out well without the eggs. Egg substitutes generally do not work as well for recipes calling for more than 3 eggs.

For recipes where the egg provides leavening, try $\frac{1}{4}$ cup carbonated water (this works well with baking mix to make little savory muffins or biscuits), 1 tablespoon vinegar + 1 teaspoon baking soda or 2 tablespoons water + 1 tablespoon oil + 2 teaspoons baking powder.

For recipes where the egg provides binding, try 1 tablespoon flaxseed meal or ground chia seed + 3 tablespoons water (let sit for 15 minutes to thicken), 3 tablespoons nut or seed butter, 2 tablespoons mashed potato, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pureed soft tofu or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup full fat yogurt.

For savory dishes like a quiche, look for recipes that use less eggs along with sour cream or cream cheese. I have quiche recipes that use 8 eggs and I have ones that use 3 eggs – guess which ones I’m using now! You can also use pureed soft tofu as an egg substitute (1/4 cup per egg) in quiches, omelets and custards, too. It doesn’t puff up like eggs, but does create a texture that is perfect for “eggy” dishes. Another option is to use some eggs and some tofu as an extender. You can also use less eggs with more cheese and add ins like vegetables and meats.

The best method is to find recipes that don’t use eggs at all. The chocolate cake recipe below is a depression era recipe. It relies on the vinegar and baking soda to make it rise, therefore making it a “Wacky” recipe! It is super easy to whisk together with common pantry items. When I was in early elementary school, I was making a cake mix with an electric mixer and my long hair got caught, jerking out a chunk of hair. After that experience, my Mom found this recipe that is just hand whisked together – much safer (although I do use the mixer

for the buttercream frosting now) and easier too. Best of all, it's delicious and has been a family favorite ever since.

For more information and recipes check out the Seasonal Eating page at bedford.tennessee.edu.

Wacky Cake

3 cups flour
2 cups sugar
6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa
2 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup vegetable oil
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 cups water
1/2 cup butter softened
3 3/4 cups powdered sugar (1 pound box)
4-5 tablespoons milk
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

In large mixing bowl, stir together flour, sugar, cocoa, baking soda and salt. Make a well in the center and add oil, vinegar, vanilla and water. Mix well and bake in greased 9" x 13" pan at 350 degrees for 35 minutes. Allow cake to cool.

For frosting: In mixing bowl, beat butter until fluffy. Add powdered sugar and beat until fluffy, adding enough milk (about 4-5 tablespoons) to make a creamy consistency. Mix in vanilla. Spread over cooled cake.