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**March 10, 2008**

**TOP 10 EASTER EGG DECORATING TIPS FROM  
THE EXPERTS AT OHIOEGGS.COM**

COLUMBUS – Easter is just around the corner, and shoppers are stocking up on essentials for family meals, Easter baskets and other holiday fare. No Easter celebration would be complete without eggs – for decorating *and* for baking.

“The spring and Easter season is one of the peak periods of demand for eggs,” said Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of the Ohio Poultry Association (OPA). “This is good news for Ohio’s \$600 million egg industry.” According to the American Egg Board, in 2005, on average, 72 million dozen eggs were sold at U.S. grocery stores each week. During the week of Easter itself, egg sales reached 93.4 million dozen. This means big business for the Buckeye state, as Ohio ranks second in egg production.

Eggs have been a part of springtime traditions for centuries. One of the favorite traditions for children and families is decorating and coloring eggs – fun for all ages and a great project for the entire family.

***Top Decorating Tips***

For creative egg decorating ideas this Easter season, the experts at OhioEggs.com are providing the top 10 egg decorating tips:

1. Decorate eggs naturally this Easter. Nature provides many different raw materials that can be used for dyeing. Yellow onion skins or hickory bark can be used for yellow dyes, madder root or brazilwood make red dyes, and walnut shells or coffee make brown. Barks, berries and leaves of other plants also can be used.
2. Use clear-drying, nontoxic, white glue to glue on different colors of dry uncooked rice; or small pasta shapes, such as alphabet letters, elbows, orzo (rice-shaped pasta) or shells. Another option is to use dry beans or unpopped popcorn kernels.
3. Use herb leaves and edible flowers and arrange them on the shell and glue them down in a pretty pattern. Or, hold the leaves tightly against the eggshell and put the shell into one leg of a clean pair of nylon hose.
4. To make a striped, checked or plaid look, cover an egg with rubber bands of different widths before dipping it into the dye. The dye won't stick to any part of the eggshell under a tight band. Just like leaf-printed eggs, this is called resist dyeing. The dye resists sticking to whatever part of the eggshell is covered.
5. Use store-bought or homemade stencils to make letters or patterns. Just tape the stencil to the eggshell and draw or paint inside the lines of the design.
6. Use crayons, felt-tipped pens or paint to make a simple design or a more complicated painting on an eggshell.
7. Glue rows of braid, ribbon, rickrack or cording onto eggs with a clear-drying, nontoxic white glue.
8. Coat a piece of bubble packaging with acrylic paint and then roll the egg over the paint. Let the paint dry on the egg and then use another color.

9. Crumple and uncrumple a large square of aluminum foil and then coat the foil with acrylic paint. Set the egg in the center of the foil and loosely wrap it.
10. Using the applicator brush, dribble gobs of rubber cement over the egg. When the cement has dried thoroughly, dip the egg into a bowl of dye. When the desired shade is achieved, remove the egg and let it dry. Peel off the glue and add additional colors.

### ***Egg Safety Reminders***

While egg decorating is a great way to celebrate the holiday, it is important to remember a few egg safety tips, especially if the eggs will be eaten.

- Wash hands well in hot, soapy water before handling eggs at every step, including cooking, cooling, dyeing and decorating.
- Refrigerate hard-cooked eggs when not working on decorating them.
- Return eggs to their cartons if not decorating them right after hard boiling them, and refrigerate them again after dyeing or decorating them.
- If eggs crack during dyeing or decorating, throw them away; also throw away any eggs that have been out of the refrigerator more than two hours.

While hard-cooked eggs are the most sturdy for decorating, another option is to empty the eggshells before decorating them. With nothing inside to spoil, the decorated eggshells can be enjoyed indefinitely – and the eggs removed from the inside can be used for holiday baking. Prick the egg at both ends, empty the egg and then rinse the empty shell under cool running water and allow to dry before decorating.

### ***Egg Nutrition***

Eggs are not only fun to decorate, but they also provide great health benefits when eaten. The incredible egg provides 13 essential nutrients, while only containing about 75 calories. Research shows that high-quality protein, like that found in eggs, helps build muscle strength and allows people to feel full for longer, helping them stay energized and maintain a healthy weight.

“In fact, egg protein is of such high quality, it is used as the standard by which all other protein sources are compared,” Chakeres said. “Eggs not only have essential amino acids, but also have zero carbohydrates.”

For more information on Easter egg decorating, Ohio egg production or for great egg recipes, visit [www.OhioEggs.com](http://www.OhioEggs.com).

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