

Problems with colouring additives in poultry feed

All major egg producers and many small ones - even those which claim to be free range and organic - use colouring additives in the feed they give their hens.

Their use is completely unnecessary in a free range flock, as hens running on quality pasture and at low stocking densities will obtain enough carotenoids from the green feed in the paddock to maintain good yolk colour. The colour will vary – depending on the time of year and what each hen has been eating – but many egg producers want to con consumers by using additives to provide consistent, bright yolk colour.

Many of those additives are synthetic - adding to the chemical cocktail mix in food. But even those which are claimed to be 'natural' are manufactured in factories – often in China. What the manufacturers mean by using the word 'natural' is that the additives may be derived from natural products but are processed and concentrated into a powder or liquid.

Three of the most widely used egg yolk pigmenters are:

Canthaxanin or Canthaxanthin which appears to be an unsafe additive. It can cause diarrhoea, nausea, stomach cramps, dry and itchy skin, hives, orange or red body secretions, and other side effects.

Do not use canthaxanthin if you experience breathing problems; tightness in the chest; swelling of the mouth, tongue or throat; a skin rash or hives; you are pregnant or breast-feeding or you are allergic to vitamin A or carotenoids.

Capsicum

Allergic reactions to capsicum may occur. Stop eating eggs with capsicum-based colouring and seek emergency medical attention if you experience symptoms of a serious allergic reaction including difficulty breathing; closing of the throat; swelling of the lips, tongue, or face; or hives.

Other less serious side effects have also been reported. Talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or health care provider if you experience upset stomach; heartburn; diarrhoea; migraine attacks or burning sensation in the mouth or throat.

Use of Capsicum is not recommended if you are pregnant. If you are or will be breast-feeding while eating food containing Capsicum, check with your doctor or pharmacist to discuss the risks to your baby.

Capsicum colourings can bring on **anaphylactic shock**. See details about which plants generate these problems on this site at the University of Maryland:

<http://www.umm.edu/altmed/articles/anaphylaxis-000008.htm>

Marigold

Some people experience breathing problems, tightness in the chest, swelling of the mouth, tongue or throat. A skin rash or hives may occur.

From the Auckland Allergy Clinic

Article written: September 2001

Salicylate sensitivity is the body's inability to handle more than a certain amount of salicylates at any one time. A salicylate sensitive person may have difficulty tolerating certain fruits or vegetables.

What are salicylates?

Salicylate is a natural chemical made by many plants. It is chemically related to aspirin, which is a derivative of salicylic acid. It is believed the plant uses it as protection from insects, and they are everywhere around us.

Although natural salicylates are found in wholesome foods, some individuals have difficulty tolerating even small amounts of them. The reaction to a natural salicylate can be as severe as that to a synthetic additive if the person is highly sensitive. Some people are troubled by only a very few, but some are troubled by all of them.

What is salicylate sensitivity?

Some adults and children have a low level of tolerance to salicylates and may get symptoms that are dose-related. The tolerated amount varies from one person to another. This is an example of food intolerance.

What are some of the symptoms of Salicylate Intolerance?

- [Chronic Urticaria & Angioedema](#)
- Trigger for [Eczema](#)
- Asthma
- Nasal Polyps
- Sinusitis
- Rhino conjunctivitis
- Stomach aches and upsets

Foods containing Salicylates

Salicylates occur naturally in many fruits, and vegetables as a preservative, to prevent rotting and protect against harmful bacteria and fungi. They are stored in the bark, leaves, roots, and seeds of plants. Salicylates are found naturally in many foods and its compounds are used in many products.

All fresh meat, fish, shellfish, poultry, eggs, dairy products, cereals, bread are naturally low in salicylates

Foods with very high Salicylate content include:

Vegetables:

Capsicum Hot Peppers

Capsaicin is the active component of Capsicum. Pure capsaicin is a volatile, hydrophobic, colourless, odourless, crystalline to waxy compound.

Capsaicin Factsheet

<http://npic.orst.edu/factsheets/Capsaicintech.pdf>

A UK report on **The Adverse Effects of Food Additives on Health**, published in the Journal of Orthomolecular Medicine described surveys on food intolerance which showed that as many as 2 in 10 people believe that they react badly to certain foods or to their constituents, whereas less than 2

in every 100 has been considered to be the official figure.

However, a recently published report indicates that small children are much more likely to react to certain foods. Although the exact numbers are not known, surveys suggest that one child in 10 may be affected in some way

Of the nearly 4000 different additives currently in use, over 3640 are used purely for cosmetic reasons and as colouring agents.

The continued reason for the use of additives is based on the argument that they are present in foods on such a minute scale that they must be harmless.

This argument may be almost acceptable regarding additives with a reversible toxicological action. However, with additives which have been found to be both mutagenic and carcinogenic, neither the human nor animal body is able to detoxify. Therefore even very minute doses of these additives, when consumed continuously, will eventually result in an irreversible toxic burden, resulting finally in cancer formation and/or in chromosomal and foetal damage. This is unacceptable, particularly as the majority of these dangerous agents belong to the food colouring group.

The full report is available here:

<http://www.orthomolecular.org/library/jom/1994/articles/1994-v09n04-p225.shtml>

An allergy is a hypersensitivity disorder of the immune system. Allergic reactions occur when a person's immune system reacts to normally harmless substances in the environment. A substance that causes a reaction is called an allergen. These reactions are acquired, predictable, and rapid. Allergy is one of four forms of hypersensitivity and is formally called type 1 hypersensitivity. Allergic reactions are distinctive because of excessive activation of certain white blood cells.

Mild allergies like hay fever are very common in humans but allergies can play a major role in conditions such as asthma. In some people, severe allergies to environmental or dietary allergens may result in life-threatening reactions called anaphylaxis.

From a Food Additive Guide

<http://mbm.net.au/health/100-181.htm>

E160(c)	Paprika extract, capsanthin, capsorubin	Capsanthin, found in paprika extract, is a red to orange coloured spice derived from the pods and seeds of the red pepper (<i>Capsicum annuum</i>). Contains vitamins A, B, C and traces of Zn, Cu, Se, Co, Mo, etc. Paprika extract also contains capsanthin. Capsanthin may be added to poultry feed to enhance egg yolk colour. Typical products include eggs, meat products. Not listed in Australia. Avoid it.
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