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Eggs promote growth of malnourished infants, children

New research shows eggs are beneficial for at-risk populations

Two new studies, from different parts of the world, conclude that eggs improve growth in malnourished infants and children. These are some of the first studies to look at the role of eggs in at-risk populations.

Results from a University of Arkansas study, funded by the American Egg Board's Egg Nutrition Center and published in the journal Food & Nutrition Research, found that adding eggs to the diets of 6 to 8-year-old children in undernourished areas of rural Uganda increased their height and weight.

In a similar Washington University in St. Louis study published in Pediatrics, feeding one egg a day (versus none) to 6 to 9-month-old infants in undernourished areas in Ecuador decreased the prevalence of stunted growth by 47% and underweight by 74%.

According to the World Health Organization, 159 million children are stunted and another 50 million suffer from wasting. Malnutrition during infancy and childhood has lasting effects on health and quality of life.

"The problem hits close to home, too," says Anne L. Alonzo, President and CEO of the American Egg Board (AEB).

"Approximately three million households in the United States are unable at times during the year to provide adequate, nutritious food for their children. Eggs are an affordable solution with one large egg providing varying amounts of 14 essential nutrients necessary for growth and development."

"These are impressive and exciting results" says Tia M. Rains, PhD, Executive Director of AEB's Egg Nutrition Center. "Adding eggs to the diet is a simple concept that could be easily implemented by any population."

Egg farms in rural and impoverished communities throughout the world can provide at-risk populations with a sustainable, affordable, and accessible source of high-quality protein and essential nutrients. Among the sources of animal protein, eggs are more affordable and have one of the lowest environmental impacts, thus making them part of the solution to feeding the growing world population.

Additional information at:

- Fast facts
- Infographic
- Sample social media posts
- ENC blog post
- Full-text of the Food & Nutrition Research study and a link to the Pediatrics study

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