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NEW STUDY REVEALS EGGS MAY REDUCE BREAST CANCER RISK

Study's release marks beginning of National Egg Month

COLUMBUS – May is National Egg Month, and Ohio's egg producers are lauding the results of a new study to be published in the June print issue of *The Journal of the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology*. The study concludes that dietary choline – an essential, but widely unknown, nutrient found in eggs – is associated with a 24 percent reduced risk of breast cancer.

“Eggs are an excellent source of choline, and they are more palatable and available than other choline sources, like liver and wheat germ,” said Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of the Ohio Poultry Association. “This new study adds to the growing body of evidence that links egg consumption to a decreased breast cancer risk.”

The study, conducted by Dr. Steven Zeisel's choline research team at the University of North Carolina, examined the diets of 3,000 women and found that the risk of developing breast cancer was 24 percent lower among women with the highest intake of choline compared to the women with the lowest intake. Women with the highest intake of choline consumed a daily average of 455 milligrams of choline or more, getting most of it from coffee, eggs and skim milk. Women with the lowest intake consumed a daily average of 196 milligrams or less.

“While choline is an important nutrient for the human diet, most individuals haven't even heard of it,” said Chakeres. “And only 10 percent of Americans currently meet the recommended intake for choline.”

According to the Institute of Medicine, adequate choline intake is 550 milligrams per day for men and breastfeeding women, 425 milligrams per day for women, and 450 milligrams per day for pregnant women. One egg contains 125.5 milligrams of choline, or roughly a quarter the recommended daily supply, making eggs an excellent source of this essential nutrient. Choline is found exclusively in the egg's yolk.

Choline is essential to the normal functioning of all cells in the body, including brain and nerve function. It is especially important for pregnant and breastfeeding women as choline can help prevent neural tube defects and is essential for fetal and infant brain and memory development. Choline also is involved in breaking down homocysteine, an amino acid in the blood that may be associated with an increased risk of heart disease.

During May – and every month – Ohio consumers have every reason to take advantage of the high protein value and broad nutritional benefits eggs offer. For more information, or for delicious egg recipes, visit www.ohioeggs.com.

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About the Ohio Poultry Association: Ohio is the second-largest egg producing state in the nation, producing nearly eight billion eggs each year at an estimated retail value of more than \$607 million. The industry employs more than 5,000, with an annual payroll exceeding \$50 million. Ohio's 27 million laying hens and 10 million pullets (hens too young to lay eggs) further help Ohio's farm economy by consuming millions of bushels of corn and soybean products each year.