



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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## **NEW STUDY REVEALS EGGS CONTRIBUTE INSIGNIFICANT RISK TO HEART DISEASE**

COLUMBUS – February is American Heart Month, a month traditionally associated with Valentine’s Day, but more recently with encouraging overall heart health. That focus is the basis for a national study recently published in the journal *Risk Analysis* that reveals that eating one egg per day is responsible for less than one percent of the risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) in healthy adults.

“For years, eggs were mistaken as the icon for high cholesterol,” said Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of the Ohio Poultry Association. “This study should influence health professionals to finally acknowledge decades of research showing that egg consumption is not a significant risk factor for heart disease.” Chakeres said, alternatively, lifestyle factors including poor diet, smoking, obesity and physical inactivity contribute 30 to 40 percent of heart disease risk, depending on gender.

### **Egg benefits diminish any perceived risk**

The study, which was funded by the Egg Nutrition Center, substantiates more than 30 years of research challenging the outdated myth that the cholesterol in eggs is linked to increased heart disease risk. Moreover, the study authors note that their analysis did not adjust for the health-promoting benefits of eggs, which may, in fact, decrease heart disease risk. For example:

- Research has found that overweight men who eat eggs while on a carbohydrate-restricted diet have a significant increase in their HDL levels (the “good” cholesterol) when compared to men who do not eat eggs.
- In a recent study, eating two eggs for breakfast, as part of a reduced-calorie diet, helped overweight or obese adults lose 65 percent more weight and reduce their Body Mass Indexes by 61 percent more than those eating a bagel breakfast of equal calories.
- Eggs are an excellent source of choline. A 2008 study concluded that a diet rich in choline and betaine, a nutrient related to choline, is associated with lower concentrations of homocysteine in the blood. High blood levels of homocysteine are indicative of chronic inflammation, which has been associated with cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer’s and dementia.

Eggs offer a number of beneficial nutrients. One egg has 13 essential vitamins and minerals and is an excellent source of choline and selenium and a good source of high-quality protein, vitamin B 12, phosphorus and riboflavin. In addition to providing one of the most affordable sources of all-natural, high-quality protein, eggs provide a valuable source of energy and help maintain and build the muscle tissue needed for strength.

### **Promoting Ohio’s economic health**

In Ohio, egg consumption is particularly important as a significant part of the state’s agricultural economy. Eggs produced in Ohio have a retail value of more than \$483 million. The industry employs more than 5,000, with an annual payroll exceeding \$50 million. Ohio’s 30 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, said Chakeres.

“Our producers work hard to provide a healthy, quality, inexpensive and nutritious source of protein,” he said. “They contribute to their communities and to the state’s economy. So, it’s satisfying to see the benefits of eggs now recognized both by science and the buying public.”

During Heart Month – 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 and for delicious recipes featuring eggs, visit [www.ohioeggs.com](http://www.ohioeggs.com).

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CONTACT: Jim Chakeres, OPA executive vice president, 614/882-6111  
Hinda Mitchell or Diane Hurd, 614/224-0600