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OHIO EGGS ARE AN ESSENTIAL PART OF A HEALTHY BREAKFAST

Easy egg breakfast quesadillas are a simple nutritious way to jump-start a child's day

COLUMBUS – The lazy days of summer have officially come to a close, and thousands of Ohio students are adjusting to waking up early again and settling back into their classrooms.

“The beginning of a new school year can be a busy time for families, but it is important to take time each morning to fit in a good, high-protein breakfast,” said Jim Chakeres, executive vice president of the Ohio Poultry Association. “Children need a healthy breakfast to stay focused and achieve in school.”

Eating a nutritious breakfast gives students the energy they need to start their mornings off right and keeps them going all day long. Studies have repeatedly shown that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and children who eat breakfast perform better academically, are less likely to become overweight, are absent and tardy less often and have fewer discipline problems.

However, a recent study by the Child Nutrition Foundation and National Dairy Council found that “on any given day, 51 percent of kids go to school without breakfast.”

According to a study published in the Journal of the American College of Nutrition, an egg breakfast induces greater satiety and significantly reduces short-term food intake compared to a bagel breakfast, and eggs also have been proven to improve memory and cognitive skills.

Eggs are high-protein, so individuals are able to stay energized and feel full longer, which helps in maintaining a healthy weight. A diet that includes eggs can reduce daily calorie intake, prevent snacking between meals and keep the body satisfied even if mealtime is delayed. Egg yolks are also one of the best sources of choline, a nutrient required by many cells in the body to function properly, especially brain and nerve cells.

“There are many simple recipes families can try to put a creative spin on traditional egg breakfasts,” said Chakeres. “One quick and delicious dish is the Easy Egg Breakfast Quesadillas. Or, in less than two minutes, chefs can whip up Coffee Cup Scramble.” (Recipe follows below.)

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.

For more information about the egg industry or for more tasty recipes, visit the OPA Web site at www.ohiopoultry.com.

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-Recipe follows below-

Easy Egg Breakfast Quesadillas

(Yields 2 Servings)

1/2 cup shredded Mexican cheese blend (2 oz.)

2 whole wheat OR flour tortillas (7-inch)

4 slices Canadian-style bacon (2-1/2 oz.)

4 eggs, beaten

Salsa

1. Sprinkle 1/4 cup cheese on one side of each tortilla. Top each with two bacon slices.
2. Coat a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray; heat over medium heat until hot.
3. Pour in eggs. As eggs begin to set, gently pull the eggs across the pan with an inverted turner, forming large soft curds. Continue cooking - pulling, lifting and folding eggs - until thickened and no visible liquid egg remains. *Do not stir constantly.*
4. Spoon eggs on top of bacon, dividing evenly. Fold tortillas over filling to cover, pressing gently.
5. Clean skillet. Coat with cooking spray; heat over medium-low heat until hot. Toast quesadillas just until cheese is melted, about one or two minutes per side. Cut into wedges; serve with salsa.

Note: Two thin ham slices can be substituted for the Canadian-style bacon.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 446, Protein 30g, Carbohydrates 24g, Total Fat 24g, Cholesterol 466 mg, Sodium 1,006 mg.

Coffee Cup Scramble

(Yields 1 Serving)

2 eggs

2 Tbsp. milk

Tbsp. shredded Cheddar cheese

Salt and pepper

1. Coat 12-oz. microwave-safe coffee mug with cooking spray. Add eggs and milk; beat until blended.

2. Microwave on high 45 seconds; stir. Microwave until eggs are almost set, 30 to 45 seconds longer.
3. Top with cheese; season with salt and pepper.

Nutritional information per serving: Calories 215, Protein 17g, Carbohydrates 2g, Total Fat 15g, Cholesterol 440 mg, Sodium 240 mg.

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