Landmark Study on the Egg Industry’s Environmental Footprint Reaches the Media

Last month, AEB shared a comprehensive press kit with the media detailing the results of the landmark 50-year Environmental Footprint Study conducted by the Egg Industry Center. The study’s main finding highlights that while the U.S. egg production has increased during the past 50 years, the industry has significantly decreased its environmental footprint. The press kit included the release, fact sheet and related infographics. The key messages noted that:

- Today’s hens are producing more eggs and living longer due to better health, nutrition and living environments.
- At the same time, egg farms use fewer resources and produce less waste
  - 26% less daily feed
  - 32% less water
  - 71% fewer greenhouse gas emissions

The full study and accompanying materials can be found on IncredibleEgg.org, and AEB is promoting these findings on its social networks. A slideshow featuring study highlights was also pitched to the media. Targeted follow up with key reporters is ongoing.

Within the first week of launch, media coverage generated more than 19 million media impressions. Additionally, AEB worked with the NBC News Channel to capture background footage of Simpson’s Eggs in Monroe, N.C. This footage was then distributed to more than 20 NBC affiliates across the country. Feedback from the NBC producer was extremely positive, saying the footage is a testament to the industry’s efforts.

AEB successfully has coordinated several interviews with Bob Krouse who is representing America’s egg farmers. Lead researcher Hongwei Xin is working on a bylined article for the Environmental Leader. Bob will also travel to New York City in December to participate in desksides with long-lead editors from top consumer magazines. Through its Consumer Marketing outreach, AEB hosts desksides regularly.

In 2014, AEB will reach key influencers in both Egg Product Marketing and Foodservice through advertising. Additionally, as interest in agricultural sustainability continues to grow, AEB will be analyzing various industry and related conferences and exhibitions for opportunities to share these findings with relevant audiences.
At the November Board Meeting, I reminded Board Members, Alternates, and egg industry guests how their AEB assessment is effectively being spent to increase egg and egg product demand through aggressive consumer, foodservice, and food manufacturing marketing programs. Several successful projects have taken place since the last July Board Meeting.

On October 30, AEB launched a media campaign to spread the incredible news of the Egg Industry Center’s landmark study on the decreased environmental footprint within the industry during the last 50 years. This is an extraordinary story to be told, so AEB committed significant assessment dollars to conduct a very comprehensive campaign to reach consumers, retailers, food manufacturers, foodservice operators, health professionals, and others. This study itself is a great example of how the industry has come together to leverage resources in the best interest of egg farmers. Coordinated by AEB, this major initiative showcases how AEB is able to use assessment dollars effectively.

While recognizing the emergence of new synthetic egg options from laboratories, we believe strongly that, for a variety of reasons, the time-tested, all-natural egg remains the best option for consumers, foodservice companies and food manufacturers. To address egg replacers, the Egg Product Marketing staff has been busily working to educate food manufacturers about the functionality and versatility of eggs and eggs’ role in keeping ingredient labels clean. As this program develops in 2014, we’ll continue promoting the benefits of egg products to this targeted audience.

As ENC’s Dr. Kanter says, “The notion that you can replace a REAL egg, which is the gold standard of high-quality protein, with a combination of low-quality plant protein sources, is misguided.” It is important that further processors recognize that AEB is aggressively addressing replacers to maintain the demand for REAL egg products.

Lastly, as I have finished my term as Chairman of the International Egg Commission (IEC), I can’t express enough how proud I am of the entire AEB team for winning the IEC’s Golden Egg Award at the Annual Conference in Cape Town for “Taking Back Easter 2013” as the best marketing campaign in the world. The campaign was recognized for its amazing results.

This comprehensive, successful campaign resulted in a 3.8 percent increase in egg category sales, as compared to Easter 2012. This increase equated to 8.1 million more dozens sold and $40 million more in dollar sales. This campaign was truly a major success, and the Consumer Marketing team plans to build on this positive Easter momentum in 2014 with an equally sensational campaign. This campaign generated a very positive return on investment (ROI) for producers.

Your assessment dollars are hard at work providing a strong ROI. To date, according to AEB’s Demand Dashboard, all channels – retail, foodservice, food manufacturing and USDA’s per capita consumption – show increases for 2013. I’m thrilled with the role AEB’s marketing initiatives play in the marketplace and how we’re able to make an impact because of producers’ investment into AEB.

During this meeting, AEB approved continued funding for the Egg Industry Center’s statistical and economic program, which has proved to be a great service to the egg industry, in 2014.

Lastly, I encourage you to read through this entire newsletter for updates, previews and recaps on AEB’s wide range of promotional activities. I’ve always held the belief that an informed producer is a supportive producer. If I can provide additional insights on any of AEB’s programs, please don’t hesitate to contact me.
During the reception at AEB’s Board Meeting, Chairman Roger Deffner presented the inaugural “Good Egg Award” as a tribute to the outstanding service and dedication of an American egg producer who exemplified the qualities of a “Good Egg.” The first “Good Egg Award” was awarded to Richard Simpson who passed away earlier this year.

Richard epitomized the qualities of a “Good Egg.” He lived a life of service with his generosity and kindness which was felt by all who knew him. He will be remembered as a man of honesty and integrity who met the needs of others. He held the trust and respect of his peers in the industry.

Richard was a major presence in the agriculture industry of North Carolina. He was President of Simpson’s Eggs, a fourth-generation family-owned business founded by his grandfather in 1925.

Richard made significant contributions of involvement and leadership to the nation’s egg industry. He served on multiple civic and agriculture-related organizations including Past Chairman and Executive Committee of the American Egg Board. In fact, he served more than 23 continuous years on AEB. He served several terms as President of the North Carolina Egg Association; was a Board Member of the United Egg Producers; a Member of the Union County, N.C. Agriculture Advisory Board, and Vice-President of Union Power Cooperative, as well as serving on the Board of Directors of BB&T Bank.

He was a committed Christian. He served as Past Chairman of the Board of Deacons at Benton’s Cross Roads Baptist Church. Richard was the first to volunteer services for any job – from driving the church bus to rolling up his sleeves for the church barbecue.

Richard believed in giving back to his community by monetary means, usually anonymous, as well as through egg donations to feed the hungry. Even in his death, he requested that donations be made to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Metrolina.

As the first recipient of the Good Egg Award, Richard Simpson sets very high standards for this incredible award.
Increasing Egg Consumption in Schools

AEB has recently started working with a leading consultant to develop programs dedicated to increasing egg servings in schools. Specifically targeting K-12, the strategy is to show the benefits of eggs to school foodservice directors and the importance of a good egg breakfast.

Eggs Can Use Gluten-Free Claim

The FDA recently published rulemaking regarding the use of the declaration of a food as “Gluten-Free.” Thanks to the efforts of USDA’s Roger Glasshoff, the egg industry can now use this voluntary claim on labels. Gluten-free foods can be labeled in a number of ways, including the terms:

- Gluten-free
- Free of gluten
- No gluten
- Without gluten

The popularity of gluten-free products has soared in recent years, and this claim could help drive increased interest in eggs.

Monitoring QSRs’ Traffic

AEB is closely watching egg servings at breakfast within quick-service restaurants (QSRs). Several factors have created a more competitive environment compared to the last 5+ years. According to The NPD Group, an AEB research supplier, here are three areas to watch:

- Reduced traffic: Since the onset of the recession, consumers have been cutting back on restaurant visits (Per Capita Visits: 2007 = 208; 2013 = 193). With consumers visiting restaurants less often, it’s become a battle for market share among major chains. And while many major chains have continued to grow traffic, it’s been a tougher road for independents.

- Competition at breakfast with new menu offerings: Morning Meal has been the industry bright spot for the past several years. It has been heavily promoted, but some new innovative products have changed the marketing and promotion focus.

- Coffee drives egg servings: Strong coffee programs have helped attract consumers at breakfast. There is a strong correlation between chains with a strong coffee program and egg servings’ growth. Burger King, Chick-fil-A and Hardee’s do not have a strong coffee program like Dunkin’ Donuts, Starbucks’ and McDonald’s, chains who are growing egg servings.

Year of the Yolk

The Sterling-Rice Group predicts yolks will be a big part of 2014 food trends. In 2014, a combined Foodservice and Egg Product Marketing effort will focus on new product development utilizing yolks with the help of Culinary Institute of America (CIA). Consumer Marketing also plans to leverage this information within its outreach efforts including social media posts.

Coupons for World Egg Day

Fans of the Incredible Edible Egg on Facebook were treated to savings in honor of World Egg Day on October 11. In just two days, 31,000 coupons offering a savings of $.55 Off the Purchase of Two Dozen Eggs were printed, and AEB gained 14,000 more Facebook fans as a result of this effort. While final results are not yet available, redemption rates for previous coupon efforts on Facebook have reached approximately 40 percent.
State Support in Minnesota

Promotions in Hong Kong

Recent efforts from USAPEEC in Hong Kong are focused on increasing the usage of U.S. eggs and egg products in the bakery sector. USAPEEC placed a full page advertisement in September’s Today’s Baking, the official magazine for Hong Kong Bakery & Confectionary Association. The advertisement, placed on the inside back cover page of the magazine, featured both U.S. eggs and egg products and noted the safety and high-quality attributes of U.S. eggs and egg products. The ads reached more than 4,000 in this industry.

Truck advertising was placed on four delivery trucks that are owned by importers of U.S. eggs in Hong Kong. The advertising carries a very clear statement: “U.S. Fresh Eggs – Hygienic and Safe; Nutritious and Tasty.” These delivery trucks are now driving around Hong Kong, 12 hours a day, seven days a week. USAPEEC will have two to three additional trucks by year’s end. Importers shared that sales of U.S. eggs have increased. In fact, according to the import statistics, U.S. fresh shell eggs to Hong Kong have grown 10 percent during the first nine months of the year.

Last month, the Chicken and Egg Association of Minnesota (CEAM) attended the 2013 Education Minnesota conference in St. Paul. The conference drew teachers of all subjects from across the state and college students pursuing a future career in education.

The CEAM booth handed out 300 free teacher kits during the conference. The teaching kits included information such as industry facts, activities for children, information on protein provided by eggs, a diagram of all parts of the egg, food safety, recipes and careers within the poultry industry. The kits were such a hit that half way through the conference CEAM ran out. Kits were mailed out to those teachers who did not receive one.

Along with the teaching kits, attendees were given an incredible pie cutter or spatula. Teachers who had taken kits from previous years at the conference were excited to get this year’s kit. They found the information to be extremely useful in their classrooms, and the recipes to be amazing. Since the conference was in St. Paul, there were quite a few teachers from inner-city schools who are teaching students who have no idea where their food comes from. These kits gave them access to information to help their students get a better understanding of not just the chicken and egg industry, but agriculture as well.

The CEAM will be attending the Education Minnesota conference in 2014 with more teaching kits!

Teachers from across the state of Minnesota received kits of materials that they can use in the classroom. Demand was so high that kits were also mailed after the conference.
The Incredible Edible Egg Promotes Holiday Baking

To help promote holiday baking with eggs, AEB will be placing signage in the egg case at 7,700 grocery stores across the U.S. From November 17-30, shoppers will be reminded to “Take Home an Extra Dozen Eggs for Your Holiday Baking” via signage in the egg departments of chains including A&P, Albertson’s, Hy-Vee, Safeway and Winn-Dixie. Earlier this year during the Easter holiday, a similar effort by AEB resulted in an egg category lift of four percent vs. those stores that didn’t feature a sign.

Egg Nutrition Center

EGGucation for High-Volume Bakers

On November 12, AEB presented egg product functional advantages and basic application formulations to students enrolled in American Institute of Baking’s (AIB) fall 16-week Baking Science & Technology resident course. Upon successful completion of the course, each participant earns recognition as a baking technologist and is eligible to earn 14 college credit hours through Kansas State University. For more information about AIB’s courses, visit AIBonline.org.

Annual Requests for Research Proposals Launches

Each year in November, ENC releases a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the upcoming research year. This year, ENC expanded its reach beyond research institutions by promoting the RFP through a banner ad in American Society for Nutrition (ASN) newsletters and via an upcoming Nutrition and Research Symposium and the Research Dietetic Practice Group.

The 2014 ENC Research Program will focus on the following priorities:

Protein in an Optimal Diet

• Defining protein needs for optimum muscle mass and function

• Role of protein at breakfast for weight management including satiety, thermogenesis, glycemic control and body composition

• Importance of protein quality to optimum protein at a meal

• Importance of macronutrient balance of protein and carbohydrates to metabolic stability

• Cost and sustainability

Cardiometabolic Health

• Cholesterol and fatty acids in lipoprotein metabolism

• Regulation of endogenous cholesterol homeostasis

• Trimethylamine and TMAO in CVD

• Aging

• Obesity

• Diabetes or Metabolic Syndrome

Nutrient Density, Nutrient Function and Nutrient Interactions

• Choline, B12, and sulfur amino acids

• Carotenoids and/or choline in cognitive function

• Vitamin D

• Novel uses of egg components for human health

• Unique nutritional impact of eggs as a complete food system

• Nutrient bioavailability

• Impact of eggs on intestinal health (microbiome)

• Cost and sustainability
Breakfast Comes to Late Night

Competition at breakfast is intense, especially as more chains and restaurants look to attract consumers. New products, which AEB helps develop, are one way operations distinguish operations themselves. Promotions are another key factor. AEB provides promotional support as well. As breakfast starts appearing on menus outside of the typical breakfast hours, AEB is thrilled to provide support as these initiatives launch. This has been a major focus of AEB’s Foodservice efforts.

Chains, many of which are close partners of AEB, know that consumers, especially Millennials who drive trends at restaurants, want their favorite foods at any time of the day. This consumer group no longer eats just three meals a day and demands menu items with eggs whenever they order, no matter what time. Eggs have been served all day at a number of Quick-Service Restaurants (QSRs) such as Dunkin’ Donuts, Jack in the Box, Sonic and Starbucks. Denny’s, IHOP and other mid-scale restaurants earned their reputations serving eggs all day and night. But now, there is even more focus on eggs, especially at late night.

Jack in the Box has recently introduced “Jack’s Munchie Meal” with four new sandwiches, one of which is a Brunch Burger. As Jack in the Box describes it, the Brunch Burger is a “Burger with a fried egg and a crispy hash brown for when it’s so late, you don’t know whether it’s dinner or breakfast.” It’s a great combination of lunch, dinner and breakfast, all in one sandwich. Priced at $6.00, the Munchie Meal comes with a sandwich like the Brunch Burger, two tacos, a mix of regular and curly seasoned fries and a regular soft drink. As Jack says, “The party starts at 9 p.m.”

With the largest share of the breakfast market, McDonald’s continues to explore late night. A year ago, a test of “McDonald’s After Midnight” ran in several markets. With consumers demanding convenience around the clock and with nearly half of McDonald’s 14,000 restaurants open 24 hours, the After Midnight menu will help drive more egg sales with their choice of an egg sandwich. This option is rolling out to interested locations.

AEB continues presenting trends and recommendations to its partners as to the profitability and demand for eggs throughout the day. Based on these newest forays, AEB’s efforts have paid off.

It’s a great combination of lunch, dinner and breakfast, all in one sandwich. Priced at $6.00, the Munchie Meal comes with a sandwich like the Brunch Burger, two tacos, a mix of regular and curly seasoned fries and a regular soft drink. As Jack says, “The party starts at 9 p.m.”
ENC Reaches Nutrition Professionals during the Food & Nutrition Conference and Expo

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics’ Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo (FNCE) is the world’s largest gathering of credentialed nutrition professionals and Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs). FNCE is also known to draw nutrition science researchers, policy makers, health-care providers and industry leaders for a four day conference addressing the latest food and nutrition information, research and trends. This year ENC traveled to Houston, Texas, to share the latest on egg nutrition research at the educational exhibit hall and Weight Management Dietetic Practice Group (WMDPG) educational breakfast session.

Tia Rains, Ph.D., Senior Director of Nutrition Research & Communications at ENC, and Heather Leidy, Ph.D., Assistant Professor in the Department of Nutrition & Exercise Physiology at the University of Missouri, presented “Changing Paradigms on Weight Management and Macronutrient Intake” during the WMDPG breakfast to approximately 200 registered dietitian nutritionists. Participants were engaged and offered great dialogue during the Q&A portion of the presentation.

At its booth, ENC speaks with the various health professionals at the show, hands out its materials and gathers feedback as to how this audience wants to receive that latest egg nutrition information. ENC’s educational exhibit also drew crowds as ENC staff, current dietetic intern and several Health Professional Advisors (HPAs) shared the latest research, educational materials and ENC materials information about continuing education credits through webinars and materials. More than 600 people signed up to receive ENC’s Nutrition Close-Up newsletter; this also entered them into a raffle for a 2014 Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Membership.