Showcasing the Benefits of REAL Eggs

Eggs are a staple ingredient for food manufacturers because of their 20+ functional properties; however, AEB recognizes the threat of egg replacer ingredients and has developed an aggressive, surround-sound approach to combat this threat.

AEB’s strategic response campaign targets food manufacturers and highlights the benefits of using REAL eggs versus egg replacer ingredients. AEB’s objectives are to:

- Convince food manufacturers to continue to use eggs within their formulations and be inspired to develop new products with egg ingredients.

- Discourage food manufacturers from considering egg replacers or, at the very least, question the viability of that option.

AEB aims to educate this market segment about the breadth and versatility of eggs’ functional aspects. Food manufacturers don't always realize that eggs are multi-functional performing several roles in food formulations. Most egg replacers are single-function. Without eggs, a more complex and lengthy ingredient statement occurs.

Today’s consumers demand transparency and simplicity in their food products. The number of consumers interested in the contents of ingredient labels continues to climb, and they are looking for very specific information. According to the 2013 International Food Information Council “Health and Wellness” annual survey, 93 percent of consumers prefer to see familiar ingredients, such as eggs, on food labels.

This month, a print and digital ad campaign launches in the ingredient supply media promoting eggs as a familiar, trustworthy ingredient that can make a difference in the quality of packaged goods and consumer buying decisions. Both the print and digital ads will contain links to access the digital version of “The Egg & Clean Labeling” white paper.

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The above white paper has been posted on the newly created AEB.org/RealEggs, along with FAQs about eggs versus replacer ingredients.
Promoting Egg Nutrition Internationally

Dr. Mitch Kanter, Executive Director of Egg Nutrition Center, spoke in September at a conference in Lusaka, Zambia sponsored by the International Egg Commission (IEC) in partnership with the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO).

The conference brought together government staff from Ministries of Agriculture of nine African nations, as well as veterinarians and agronomists, among others.

Dr. Kanter was invited to speak about the potential impact of dietary protein in Third World countries. Afterward, Dr. Kanter flew to Cape Town, South Africa, to participate in IEC’s annual conference, where he gave a presentation citing progress on the development of the International Egg Nutrition Consortium.

To date, more than 40 countries have joined the International Egg Nutrition Consortium.

A microsite within IEC’s site has been created as an information sharing resource. Bi-monthly updates are sent out to those involved. IEC views the Consortium as useful for:

— Sharing ideas and resources
— Leveraging research
— Developing educational programs
— Providing input/information in a crisis
— Avoiding duplication/replication of materials
— Identifying international experts.

Dr. Kanter views this effort as a means to learn from the international community.

Connecting with Health Professionals

ENC sponsored an education session at the Gerontological Advanced Practice Nurses Association (GAPNA) conference in Chicago last month.

Sponsored events like this allow ENC to better connect with its target demographic of health professionals (HPs) while driving traffic to its booth.

Barbara Resnick, Ph.D., RN, CRNP, FAAN, FAANP, presented on the topic of sarcopenia, a condition of age-related loss of muscle mass and strength. More than 70 attended the session.

Members of GAPNA are certified advanced practice nurses who work with older adults in a wide variety of practice settings. GAPNA is the organization of choice for advanced practice nurses who want to pursue continuing education in gerontological care and who seek peer support from experienced clinicians, such as Dr. Resnick.

ENC also sponsored a session at the Osteopathic Medical Conference & Exposition (OMED) conference on October 1. Dr. Tia Rains presented during a demo workshop to 50 attendees.
Leveraging an Industry Expert

At the recent IFT Annual Expo in Chicago, USAPEEC’s Dr. Shelly McKee participated in scheduled interviews with all the media outlets dedicated to covering food product development to position egg products as consumer-friendly, label-friendly ingredients.

Several online articles have been published with more expected to appear in print.

On social media, this target audience will read these messages through Twitter and blog posts.

Elements of this surround-sound campaign include a white paper titled “The Egg & Clean Labeling” that outlines the relevance and importance of eggs in today’s marketplace and their power to build trust with consumers. The white paper has been posted on AEB.org/RealEggs.

In 2014, AEB will leverage video testimonials from food manufacturers who tried replacers but were disappointed with the results.

Additional tactics for next year include:

• Webinar showcasing how eggs contribute to clean labels
• Web-based animated infographic
• Additional white papers
• Press releases and social media.

All these efforts and those still in development reinforce that REAL eggs are valuable in meeting diverse formulation requirements, while providing the clean labels consumers insist on.

State Funding in Oklahoma

Utilizing AEB’s State Support Funding, Oklahoma’s egg farmers sponsored the Eggscellent Oklahoma Breakfast Cook-Off at this year’s state fair. On September 19, the event highlighted the most important meal of the day — breakfast and the Incredible Edible Egg. Contestants prepared their egg dishes at home and then transported them to the fairgrounds for the judges.

The judges rated each entry for its nutritional quality, ease of preparation, taste appeal, appearance and creativity. Each dish also included at least one egg per serving.

Newspaper advertising and promotional materials at the fair generated interest from both home cooks and attendees.

Holly Cole, of Norman, Okla., won first place for her beautiful and tasty recipe—Mexican Egg Casserole. The top three winners won monetary prizes and medallions, with ribbons going to the remaining top contenders.

All recipes became the property of the Oklahoma Egg Council and the Oklahoma State Fair.
AEB Wins the Golden Egg

AEB’s “Taking Back Easter 2013” campaign won the Golden Egg Award from the International Egg Commission (IEC) for the best marketing and promotional campaign in the world.

AEB listened to egg producers’ directive to reclaim lost sales traditionally experienced at Easter by developing the “Taking Back Easter 2013” campaign. Under the leadership of Jerry Wilkins, Chairman of the Consumer Marketing Committee, 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!

With these figures in mind and the recognition of the international egg community, AEB is already hard at work on the Easter 2014 outreach that will build on this campaign’s incredible success.

This honor would not be possible without a national checkoff program to execute and coordinate the details of such an involved campaign. The American Egg Board’s win was truly made possible by its Board Members and Alternates who oversee and direct promotional efforts on behalf of America’s egg farmers.

Speakers’ Workshop Held

Last month, AEB hosted a Speakers’ Workshop in Chicago that trained 10 additional speakers who will reach their local neighbors at civic groups, libraries and other audiences interested in learning about modern egg production and how eggs move from the farm to table.

Since 2009, AEB’s Speakers’ Bureau has reached more than 20,000 consumers at almost 700 presentations. This local, grassroots effort connects consumers with those producing their food.

AEB’s speakers consistently earn high marks from their audiences and benefit from interactions directly with the end users of the Incredible Edible Egg. Recent comments from audience members include:

— Did not realize how “high-tech” egg farming has become. Very impressive.
— I now have an informed opinion — More supporting of the egg industry now
— Information replaced some assumptions
— I now understand why organic eggs are more expensive
— Wonderful responses to questions-excellent visual presentation.

State Coupons

Based on the success of its online coupon programs over the last few years, AEB is eggcited to launch a coupon program for the state promotional organizations. AEB is able to leverage its existing vendor relationships to make executing this promotion at the state level as simple as possible. State promotional funding can be used toward this digital coupon program.

State organizations will place a link on their social media sites or online websites with a directive to download the coupon. Coupons can also be printed for distribution at in-person events.

Questions can be directed to AEB’s Jacinta Le Donne, jledonne@aeb.org or 224.563.3709.

World Egg Day Offer

World Egg Day was Friday, October 11. In celebration, AEB offered a $.55 Off Two Dozen Eggs Coupon to all Incredible Edible Egg Facebook fans and promoted easy egg recipes on IncredibleEgg.org. Additionally, website visitors were driven to “like” the Facebook page.
Joanne Ivy, AEB President & CEO and Immediate Past Chairman of the International Egg Commission (IEC), was recognized by Novus International at IEC’s Gala for her work to globally raise the awareness of the importance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Novus, an international leader in CSR, coordinates major programs worldwide to help feed the world affordable, wholesome food, and to improve quality of life for the world.

Under her Chairmanship, Ivy established a CSR Working Group to address CSR projects worldwide. The IEC, on behalf of the global egg community, defines social responsibility as balancing the needs of people, animals and the planet. When evaluating its social responsibility, IEC is passionate about: 1) Producing safely, the highest quality protein. 2) Feeding the growing population, and ensuring food affordability. 3) Providing choice. 4) Caring for the environment; and 5) Ensuring the health and wellbeing of our hens.

IEC is also in the process of establishing a foundation to identify and fund CSR projects throughout the world.

Driving Sales at Retail

AEB recently tested a regional retail breakfast promotion with Sargento Cheese, Mission Tortillas and Johnsonville Sausage. The consumer offer was: Get 1 Dozen Eggs Free with the Purchase of Sargento Cheese, Mission Tortillas and Johnsonville Sausage, and was promoted via in-store signage and store circulars at Roundy stores in Chicago and Wisconsin. Timing was September 22-28, and results are expected soon. If successful, the promotion could be expanded to other retailers next year.
Partnering with Egg Ambassadors

This spring as part of the Good Egg Project (GEP), AEB conducted an online “conversation audit” to investigate what was being written online about eggs and where those conversations were occurring. AEB focused on three critical areas — Cooking, Health & Nutrition and Egg Production — to identify top online influencers who could help amplify GEP messages. Specific criteria for each category were as follows:

**Cooking**
- Shares creative and classic egg recipes
- Shows a general passion for cooking with eggs in a variety of meals
- Demonstrates making eggs in various forms (scrambled, poached, etc.)

**Health & Nutrition**
- Values eggs as a nutritious ingredient
- Provides nutritional reasoning for the egg white and the yolk
- Shares healthy egg recipes

**Egg Production**
- Represents a voice on behalf of modern egg production
- Speaks as a representative of the farming industry as a whole
- Touches on animal welfare and farming methods

As a result, AEB kicked off its Blog Ambassadors Program on World Egg Day, October 11. These initial posts celebrated the partnership and World Egg Day by announcing themselves as GEP Ambassadors, stating why they love eggs and sharing international recipes from IncredibleEgg.org.

The bloggers AEB has partnered with include: Chez Us, Taste and Tell, Un Sophist iCook, Healthy Aperture, The Lemon Bowl and Nutritionella. AEB’s Blog Ambassador relationships will conclude following the 2014 Easter campaign.

Liz Della Croce, author of The Lemon Bowl, is one of AEB’s new Egg Ambassadors as part of the Good Egg Project.