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For more information, contact:
John Howeth
American Egg Board
(847) 296-7043

Eggs Find Their Place at the School Table

Smart Snacks Rule Cites Eggs as “Nutrient Dense” Option for Schools

Park Ridge, IL (July 28, 2016)—Hard-boiled eggs provide a nutrient dense option for healthy snacks and a la carte offerings in schools, according to the final guidelines issued recently by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service under its Smart Snacks Rule¹. In a change from its earlier renditions of the rule, this final decision exempts whole eggs from limits on both total fat and saturated fat.

In fact, the final rule’s preamble specifically cites the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans² (DGA) that identifies eggs as “nutrient dense” and includes eggs in its recommended healthy eating patterns. Schools can include hard-cooked or hard-boiled eggs as snacks or menu items, as long as no fat has been added to them.

One large egg contains varying amounts of 13 essential vitamins and minerals plus six grams of protein all for 70 calories, leading to its designation as a nutrient-dense food.

“The ruling makes available a nutrient-dense food to school nutrition programs, one that can help our student population feel full and satisfied,” Anne L. Alonzo, President and CEO of the American Egg Board. “Multiple studies³ demonstrate the satiating effects of protein-rich foods like eggs, so the inclusion of hard-boiled eggs to snacks and a la carte menus can benefit students of all ages.”

The Smart Snacks ruling mandates the types of foods sold at schools, during the school day, meet certain nutrition standards, starting in school year 2014-2015. This Smart Snacks in School regulation applies to foods sold a la carte, in the school store and in vending machines. The ruling is designed to encourage children to make healthier snack choices that give them the nutrition they need to grow and learn, and conforms to the provisions of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010.

“The final rule reflects the efforts of both AEB and the Egg Nutrition Center to promote and provide science-based information about eggs to the discussion regarding the latest DGA,” said Alonzo. “Incorporating eggs in the final Smart Snacks rule not only benefits kids with a practical and flexible solution to promote healthier eating in schools, it’s also a favorable development for egg demand.”

The American Egg Board has an entire portfolio of ideas and recipes using hard-boiled eggs, tailored specifically for school nutrition programs. Visit aeb.org/foodservice/schools for more information.

About the American Egg Board (AEB)

Through AEB, U.S. egg producers come together, in accordance with statutory authority, to establish, finance and execute coordinated programs, on research, education and promotion—all geared to drive demand for eggs and egg products. AEB and all program activities are funded by U.S. egg producers, subject to USDA approval. Visit www.aeb.org for more information.

¹ <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

² <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/>

³ <http://www.eggnutritioncenter.org/topics/weight-management-satiety/page/8/>