

NEWS RELEASE

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New Benefits of Whey Proteins from Dairy Uncovered

New scientific evidence supporting the health benefits of whey proteins continues to grow for both men and women

ARLINGTON, Va., September 12, 2018 – As part of its ongoing efforts to showcase the benefits of dairy proteins across life stages, the U.S. Dairy Export Council (USDEC) is sharing new updates on how whey proteins from dairy can assist individuals with meeting health goals in their everyday lives.

“While research has established dairy proteins’ unique ability to help improve body composition during weight loss, increase muscle mass when combined with resistance training and aid in muscle recovery after endurance exercise, people often envision these benefits as being reserved for young, competitive athletes,” said Matt Pikosky, vice president, Nutrition Science & Partnerships at the National Dairy Council. “New research has shown dairy proteins have great benefits for women—without adding the bulk—as well as older individuals.”

The beneficial effects of whey protein supplementation are well-demonstrated in men, but less studied in women. A new study published in *Nutrition Reviews* suggests whey protein also produces positive results in females. In this systematic review and meta-analysis of 13 randomized controlled trials, totaling nearly 500 adult women, researchers found adding whey protein to a daily diet improved body composition by modest increases in lean mass without influencing changes in fat mass. Additionally, body composition improvements were even greater during reduced calorie diets, which suggests whey protein may be especially helpful in preserving lean muscle mass during periods of weight loss.

Another newly published review in *Advances in Nutrition* supports the role of protein, namely the amino acid leucine, in preventing age-related muscle loss. Available evidence supports leucine, when consumed as part of a higher protein diet, may be especially beneficial to preserving muscle mass, as it plays a key role in stimulating muscle protein synthesis. Thus, a special emphasis should be placed on consuming this amino acid. One of the best sources of leucine is whey protein from dairy. Based on their findings, the authors recommend older individuals consume a minimum of 1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight—an amount which is 50% higher than the current Dietary Reference Intakes for healthy adults. Additional recommendations suggest spacing protein intake evenly throughout the day to maximize muscle protein synthesis.

These are just two of a growing number of studies supporting the benefits of incorporating whey from dairy into daily eating plans. Whey protein is a versatile ingredient that can be added to foods, such as smoothies, yogurt, oatmeal or nut butters, as a convenient way to increase protein consumption throughout the day. To provide consumers with more options, food manufacturers are developing innovative products that incorporate whey protein into various snacks, nutrition bars, baking mixes, beverages and more.

“Not all protein sources can boast these benefits, given differences in protein quality,” said Kara McDonald, vice president, Global Marketing Communications at USDEC. “As the world’s largest producer of cow’s milk and whey ingredients, the U.S. dairy industry is uniquely positioned to help formulators meet consumer demand for sustainably produced, nutritious, functional, versatile, securely sourced ingredients at scale.”

The U.S. dairy industry offers a sustainably produced portfolio of high-quality, nutritional and functional dairy ingredients, making it easy for local food and beverage manufacturers to capitalize on these market trends and create new, relevant products.

Visit ThinkUSAdairy.org for more information on nutrition, trends and applications with U.S. dairy proteins.

The studies can be accessed here:

- <https://academic.oup.com/nutritionreviews/article-abstract/76/7/539/4982765>
- <https://academic.oup.com/advances/article-abstract/9/3/171/4964951>

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About U.S. Dairy Export Council

The U.S. Dairy Export Council® (USDEC) is a nonprofit, independent membership organization that represents the global trade interests of U.S. dairy producers, proprietary processors and cooperatives, ingredient suppliers and export traders. USDEC aims to enhance U.S. global competitiveness through programs in market development that build global demand for U.S. dairy products, resolve market access barriers and advance industry trade policy goals. As the world's largest producer of cow's milk, the U.S. dairy industry offers a sustainably produced, world-class and ever-expanding portfolio of cheese varieties as well as nutritional and functional dairy ingredients (e.g., skim milk powder, lactose, whey proteins). USDEC, together with its network of overseas representatives in Southeast Asia and around the world, also works directly with global buyers and end-users to accelerate customer purchasing and innovation success with quality U.S. dairy products and ingredients.