

VITAMIN D in eggs

Vitamin D plays an important role in supporting calcium absorption in the body and sustaining good bone health and muscle function. Recent studies have also linked a deficiency of Vitamin D to conditions such as cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, multiple sclerosis and some forms of cancer.

Australians have traditionally obtained enough Vitamin D through sun exposure but lifestyle changes and sun safety campaigns have resulted in many people spending less time outside. Subsequently, around one-quarter of the population is now Vitamin D deficient and there has been widespread media coverage of it as an emerging health issue.

The good news is eggs in the diet can help people meet their Vitamin D needs as they are one of the few foods that contain naturally high levels. Australian Eggs published an updated Nutrition Information Panel (NIP) for eggs in late-2018 that shows **an average serve of eggs provides 82% of the adult RDI of Vitamin D.**

ON-PACK CLAIMS

Given the increasing understanding of Vitamin D deficiency, there may be an advantage for businesses that include an on-pack Vitamin D content claim such as:

- ▶ 2 eggs provide 82% of your daily vitamin D requirements

However, it is important that businesses test their own eggs before making on-pack claims of this nature.

At a minimum, a 'good source' claim can be made on-pack where the product has at least 25% of the RDI for Vitamin D (2.5µg per serve of eggs).

FEED FORMULATION

Since last year's NIP review, Australian Eggs has undertaken further research to understand what can be done to ensure consistency in the Vitamin D levels of eggs from all farms. The findings are:

- ▶ Adding vitamin D3 or 25-OH-D3 to poultry feed increases the Vitamin D levels of eggs
- ▶ Hens need to be fed a Vitamin D enriched diet for at least 3 weeks to ensure adequate amounts transfer to the eggs
- ▶ Adding these ingredients does not adversely affect hen productivity or egg quality

To reach 82% RDI of Vitamin D, a suggested finished feed would include:

- ▶ 69µg/kg of 25-OH-D3
- ▶ 400 µg/kg of Vitamin D3

FURTHER GUIDANCE

The Egg Labelling Integrity Panel website elip.com.au is a free service for businesses to have labels checked for accuracy prior to printing.

- ▶ **For more information contact Australian Eggs on** (02) 9409 6999 | contacts@australianeggs.org.au

