

LOCAL & STATE

Even with higher prices, eggs still a cheap complete protein

If you believe wearing a mask protects you from infections, don't let anyone pressure you to take it off. COVID and flu have not left town. Eat healthy, be physically active and get adequate sleep, please.



KATHY KOLASA

I have always thought of eggs as a great source of inexpensive but high-quality protein. With the price increases, are they? GF, Greenville

That's a great question. And it's always good to re-evaluate some of our beliefs and see if they still hold true about healthy eating. Ellen Williams, a soon-to-graduate Brody medical student agreed to research your question and figure out the math. Brittany Smith, MS, RDN, LDN, nutrition specialist in the Department of Family Medicine at ECU Health Physicians also contributed. Here is what we all learned.

You are correct. For years, registered dietitian nutritionists (RDNs) have encouraged some patients to eat an egg for a big serving of protein in a small shell. Eggs provide all nine essential amino acids you need, just like all animal sources of protein. However, Americans have seen the price of a dozen eggs skyrocket in the past month due to a large outbreak of a deadly bird flu that, to date, has wiped out over 58 million chickens in flocks across America. This has caused a shortage of eggs across the nation, which drives up their cost. Like you, others are wondering if eggs are still worth buying at such a high price.

At the start of 2023, one dozen eggs cost around \$4.25, a huge increase compared to \$1.65 in the years prior. That is about 35 cents per egg, and one egg will give you around 6 grams of protein. So that means that you are paying about 6 cents for one gram of protein when you buy an egg. A can of tuna will cost approximately 7 cents per gram of protein and sliced oven-roasted tur-

key breast, a favorite sandwich ingredient for many eastern North Carolinians, can cost a whole 10 cents per gram of protein. We priced a chicken breast last week and it came to be about 3 cents for a gram of protein. When we compare eggs to other sources of animal protein, the egg generally still comes out as an excellent buy.

You can compare the protein in eggs to the protein in a few plant foods that, like animal foods, provide all nine essential amino acids. Some of them are soybeans (2 cents a gram), tofu (3 cents a gram), edamame (7 cents a gram), quinoa (6 cents a gram) and chia seeds (9 cents a gram). They are in the same ballpark as eggs for affordable complete proteins but they may be more difficult for some to prepare. For lentils and pinto beans, you will only pay around 2 cents for one gram of protein, making them a more wallet-friendly protein choice when compared to eggs.

In fact, many years ago, nutritionists thought vegetarians would need to "complement" their plant proteins at the same meal. So, rice and beans or lentils and other plants, nuts, or whole grains would be combined in a meal. Scientists' understanding of metabolism of proteins has advanced and it's now known that while you still need to get all nine amino acids, it doesn't have to be at the exact same time.

You might still read about "incomplete" and "complete" proteins or you might hear a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) just acknowledge that some plant proteins contain limited amounts of some essential amino acids

and encourage including a variety of plant-based foods and proteins in the diet. And note from our shopping and math that not all plant foods that are good sources of protein are inexpensive. For example, whole almonds and chia seeds at roughly 9 cents per gram don't quite measure up to the cost, convenience, and preference of eating eggs. You will have to do a little more math to see if the plant foods you enjoy preparing and eating are more or less expensive than an egg.

There are plenty of other reasons that adding an egg to your diet is a good choice from a nutrition standpoint. Besides being a complete protein, eggs are a source of Vitamin A, which is important for vision and acts as an antioxidant. Eggs are a good source of Vitamin D, which keeps your bones strong and supports your immune system.

One hard-cooked egg has around 70 to 80 calories, which is great for those of us working toward maintaining a healthy weight. The egg yolk is a source of dietary cholesterol, but the results of recent studies don't require most people to restrict their consumption. Most people should be fine eating five or six eggs per week.

Make sure to cook them completely, especially if you have a problem with your

immune system, are pregnant or elderly. Aim for 160 degrees Fahrenheit if you are cooking that egg for the first time and aim for 165 degrees Fahrenheit if you are reheating an egg-based

dish, such as a quiche.

Luckily, egg prices have started to slowly come down and consumers should start to see that in their home grocery stores soon if they haven't already.

Professor emeritus Kathy Kolasa, a registered dietitian nutritionist and Ph.D., is an affiliate professor in the Brody School of Medicine at ECU. Contact her at kolaska@ecu.edu.

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals will be received until **2:00 p.m. March 28, 2023** in the Pitt County Facilities Services Office, 300 Sylvania Street, Winterville, NC 27834 opened and read aloud for the **Farmville Central High School HVAC Replacement**. The projects will include replacing (20) split system air conditioning units, (11) packaged rooftop units, and (1) exterior wall mounted unit with new 4-pipe air handling units. Included will also be (3) 110-ton air cooled chillers, (2) 2500 MBH boilers, and associated pumps and piping. Associated electrical and structural support will be included as part of this contract. Controls will be furnished and installed by the owner.

A Pre-Bid Conference will be held at **11:00 a.m. on March 14, 2023**. Contractors interested in bidding shall meet at Farmville Central High School, 3308 E Wilson Street, Farmville, NC 27828. The designer will issue complete Bid Documents electronically. **Contact Atlantec Engineers, 3221 Blue Ridge Road, Suite 113, Raleigh, NC 27612, 919-571-1111** harrison@atlantecengineers.com for complete bidding requirements.

Bid Bond is required. Certain MBE guidelines must be followed.

Single prime bids will be accepted in accordance with G.S. 143-128. Requirements for bidding this project are as follows:

- Three references from previously satisfied commercial customers.
- Furnish NC License Number** (G.S. Chapter 87 establishes licensing requirements for general, plumbing, heating, electrical, and refrigeration contractors for construction projects costing \$30,000 or more).
- Insurance - The Contractor shall provide, as required by law, insurance for his employees. The Cumberland County Schools assumes no liability for injuries or accidents related to the Contractual Agreement. The Contractor shall furnish a certificate to the Owner (Pitt County Schools) as a Proof of Coverage. The Contractor shall maintain and pay the Insurance Coverage, which shall not be less than the following:
 - Workman's Compensation Statutory
 - Employers Liability \$100,000
- Owner/Officer must be included in coverage
 - General Liability (per person/per occurrence):
 - Bodily and Personal Liability \$500,000 per occurrence
 - Property Damage \$500,000/\$1,000,000 Aggregate
 - Automobile Liability (per person/per occurrence)
 - Bodily Injury \$500,000 per occurrence
 - Property Damage: \$500,000/\$1,000,000 Aggregate
- Builder's Risk or Installation Floater Contract Amount
- Recruitment of minority business participation in accordance with G.S. 143-128.

The Owner reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Aaron D. Erickson
Director of Facility Services
Pitt County Schools
300 Sylvania Street, Winterville, NC 27834

Sen. Smith planning series of public forums

The Daily Reflector

District 5 state Sen. Kandie Smith will hold a series of public forums in Pitt and Edgecombe counties in March and April, her office announced.



SMITH

As the governor and General Assembly prepare to release their proposed state budgets, Smith's office said she will meet with members of the public to hear concerns and answer questions.

District 5 includes Edgecombe and Pitt counties, and the sessions will be held 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday nights in eight communities. The tour started Tuesday

in Rocky Mount at Edgecombe Community College. Upcoming stops include:

- Tarboro, March 9, 201 St. Andrew St.
- Pinetops, March 14, 101 E. Hamlet St.
- Winterville, March 23, 1986 Pitt Tech Road at Pitt Community College
- Greenville, March 28, 3511 N. Memorial Drive
- Ayden, March 30, 4144 West Ave.
- Chicod, April 4, 3833 Stokestown-Saint John Road
- Farmville, April 6, 4276 W. Church St.

Smith is serving her first term in the senates. She was elected to the state House of Representatives in 2018 and served two terms.

She was the first black female mayor of Greenville and served on the City Council for more than nine years.

Fort Bragg service member indicted in fraud cases related to scams

The Daily Reflector

An active duty service member stationed at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville has been indicted in multiple interstate and international fraud and money-laundering scams involving online romance scams and other schemes, the U.S. Attorney General announced on Friday.

Sanda G. Frimpong, 33, was arrested Wednesday upon the unsealing of a 19-count indictment that included charges of money

laundering, fraud, conspiracy, aggravated identity theft and access device fraud in connection. He faced 10 to 20 years in prison per count and potential fines.

"Online romance scams are increasingly targeting lonely, vulnerable, and often elderly victims," U.S. Attorney Michael Easley said.

The scams ensnared victims by earning their confidence with promises of romance, sharing of an inheritance or other riches, or other scenarios.

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