

# Scientist develops healthier egg

By Jennifer Walker  
Staff Reporter

Which came first, the chicken or the egg?

Who knows? But an East Campus researcher can tell you what comes next: the Omega egg.

This egg — developed by Sheila Sheideler, a poultry scientist — contains more omega-3 fatty acids, which may boost the ratio of good to bad cholesterol and reduce the occurrence of blood clots.

This, in turn, reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease, Sheideler said.

NU athletes have been eating the eggs since September, when the eggs made their debut at the Training Table, a special food service for athletes.

The Training Table also offers out-of-season fresh produce, reduced fat and calorie meats, and special vegetarian meals, said David Ellis, coordinator of performance nutrition.

Ellis said he was excited about the egg's increased nutritional value.

"We're always looking for avenues and vehicles to increase the omega-3 complex in our athlete's diets," he said. "We'll go the extra nine yards for our health-conscious student population."

About 50 to 60 dozen Omega eggs

*"We'll go the extra nine yards for our health-conscious student population."*

**DAVID ELLIS**

Nutrition coordinator

are used monthly at the Training Table. Sheideler needs to find 100 more hens to produce enough eggs to meet the athletes' needs.

Sheideler produces the eggs by feeding hens from UNL's Poultry Research Facility 15 percent flax seed. The seed contains more omega-3 fatty acids than any non-marine source. Fish oil is the most common source of omega-3, she said.

More than 400 UNL student athletes eat lunch and dinner at the Training Table daily, and about 50 eat breakfast there, Ellis said.

Athletes don't know they are eating a specially formulated egg. Lisa Olander, a freshman NU swimmer, said she noticed no difference in the eggs.

"I thought they tasted kind of bland

and runny," Olander said. "I didn't know they were different."

But UNL nutrition scientist Nancy Lewis is working on a dietary study that indicates the Omega Eggs do taste different, even better.

Lewis is researching what effect eating Omega eggs instead of regular eggs would have on people with high cholesterol.

The results are not complete, but Lewis has reported that people in the study liked the eggs so much they wanted to know where they could buy them.

The UNL Dairy Store in the Food Industry Complex on East Campus sells Omega eggs for 80 cents a dozen, Sheideler said.



James Mehlsing/DN

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