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### **FLAVORED MILK HELPS KIDS AVOID NUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES**

*The small amount of sugar in chocolate and strawberry milk is well worth the nutritional tradeoff*

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) Monday, September 25, 2017 - By the time children are six years old, most are already [deficient in calcium and vitamin D](#). In fact, the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) name them as nutrients of concern. While milk is an ideal way to ensure kids are getting the nutrition they need for healthy growth and development, parents of picky eaters know they're not always willing to drink it. Offering choices like chocolate or strawberry milk is a proven way to get kids to choose milk more often and to drink more of it.

"When schools remove flavored milk as an option, about 37 percent of students don't drink milk at lunchtime and a lot of milk ends up in the trash can," said Karen Bakies, a registered dietitian and the nutrition affairs director for the [American Dairy Association Mideast](#), headquartered in Columbus, Ohio. "Flavored milk has the same nine essential vitamins and minerals found in white milk, and kids love the taste. Giving them choices makes it easier to give them the nutrition they need during those critical bone-growing years."

While some parents may be concerned with the added sugar in flavored milk, Bakies says the small amount of sugar is well worth the nutritional tradeoff. Flavored milk accounts for just four percent of a child's added sugar intake, compared to other sugar-sweetened beverages such as soda or fruit drinks that account for about 46 percent of added sugar in a child's diet.

"The nutritional value far outweighs the concern over added sugar in flavored milk," said Bakies. "Whether it's white, chocolate or strawberry, each eight-ounce serving of milk is packed with dense nutrition that not only provides children with those nutrients of concern, but also nutrients like phosphorus and B vitamins."

Choosing flavored milk at lunch helps kids get the three recommended servings of dairy each day, and local dairy farmers partner with school districts to provide fat free or 1% options.

Many schools are also taking the benefits of chocolate milk beyond the lunchroom and serving it on the sidelines. Studies show that chocolate milk is an ideal beverage for student athletes because it has the fluids to rehydrate them, the perfect mix of carbohydrates and protein to refuel them, and the nutrients to help them build strong bodies.

Because of its nutritional value, the Ohio High School Athletic Association and the West Virginia Secondary School Activities Commission have both made chocolate milk the official beverage for their student athletes.

For more information on the nutritional benefits of flavored milk, go to [www.drink-milk.com](http://www.drink-milk.com).

**MULTIMEDIA AVAILABLE:** For broadcast quality b-roll and sound bites and high resolution stills, you can access the American Dairy Association Mideast's multimedia newsroom here: <http://bit.ly/2hgyBMK>

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