



DAIRY HERD
NETWORK

Researchers keep looking for the magical compound in milk

Tom Quaife, Editor, Dairy Herd Network | Updated: January 25, 2012

Maybe calcium isn't the key to weight loss after all.

There could be a multitude of factors in dairy products — or just one magical compound — that is responsible.

That is the conclusion from [a study published this month](#) in the *Nutrition and Metabolism* journal. Researchers found that a high-calcium diet containing nonfat dry milk reduced weight gain in obese mice better than high calcium alone. In fact, high calcium by itself didn't really help, and may have made matters worse.

If calcium isn't the factor behind weight loss, what is?

Researchers in the mouse study (cited above) say that further investigation is needed.

Greg Miller, president of the Dairy Research Institute and executive vice president of the National Dairy Council, says there are many different factors in dairy products, such as whey protein or branched chain amino acids, that might explain the weight-loss advantages. "Conjugated linoleic acid is another potential bioactive that may have an effect on body fat accumulation," he says.

Bottom-line: The study published in *Nutrition and Metabolism* is good news for the dairy industry, Miller says.

"The results of this study support a growing body of research that demonstrates that adequate dairy food consumption has good effects on metabolism by reducing inflammation and reducing body weight," he says. "The health effects of adequate dairy consumption were recognized in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which indicated that dairy intake was associated with reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes."

The study's authors are from the University of California-Davis and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

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