

Healthful plant nutrients also found in meat and milk

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Beneficial nutrients called phytoestrogens found in plant-based food are also found in meats, seafood and soy products, according to a new study. Credit: Lisburncity.gov.uk

Counterintuitive as it may seem, those healthful phytoestrogen nutrients that consumers usually associate with fruits and vegetables also exist in foods of animal origin. After all, "phyto" means "plant." Now the first comprehensive study of phytoestrogen content in foods has identified the best sources of these nutrients. The study is scheduled for the November 26 issue of ACS' bi-weekly *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

In the study, Gunter G. C. Kuhnle, Laure Thomas and colleagues point out that phytoestrogens have garnered increasing attention for their beneficial role in preventing several diseases, including osteoporosis,

type-2 diabetes and certain cancers. But much of the scientific research on these compounds has focused on their occurrence in plant-based foods, which has led to an underestimation of actual amounts people consume, the study says.

The researchers analyzed 115 foods of animal origin and found that all food groups studied contained phytoestrogens. Isoflavones — one of the three major classes of these compounds — were considerably higher in soy-based foods. In fact, the amount of phytoestrogens in soy-based infant formula was more than 300 times higher than in normal infant formula. In animal products, phytoestrogens are low when compared to foods containing soy, the paper notes, but the range is similar to that of many commonly consumed vegetables.

Article: "Phytoestrogen Content of Foods of Animal Origin: Dairy Products, Eggs, Meat, Fish, and Seafood",
[dx.doi.org/10.1021/jf801344x](https://doi.org/10.1021/jf801344x)

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