## NUTRITION AND HEALTH PROVIDED BY ANIMAL PRODUCTS

**Rationale:**
A diversity of food sources remains a key element to a balanced diet, good health and even survival [1]. Animal products are excellent sources of high quality protein and other nutrients that are readily absorbable, and thus make important contributions to a nutritionally balanced diet.

As societies develop economically, they tend to add diversity to their diets. Typically, animal products are more expensive than vegetable products but animal products are well recognized for bringing a more balanced nutritional status to a population. Diets that exclude animal products often require dietary supplements [2,3]. Furthermore, meat, eggs and dairy foods provide complementary nutrition to most indigenous diets, resulting in improved nutritional status and health of global populations.

**Policy Statement**:
**FASS works to raise the nutritional status of the global population by expanding the diversity of foods available to all, especially through the inclusion of nutritionally dense animal products.**

**Policy Objectives:**

- FASS supports having available to all people all the foods necessary for a balanced diet and optimal nutritional status. Nutrient density represents a major factor that is efficiently delivered through dairy, meat and egg products.
- FASS can provide nutritional data and educational assistance to any agency or educator showing how to optimize local diets in order to achieve higher nutritional status in a given population.
- FASS remains committed to developing new technology that will enhance sustainability while decreasing the cost of production of animal products and thus the cost to consumers.
- FASS encourages funding for research and education to meet these three objectives that focus on improving the nutritional status of all people.

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[1] Arimond, M. and M.T. Ruel. 2004. Dietary diversity is associated with child nutritional status: Evidence from 11 demographic and health surveys. J. Nutr. 134:2579-2585.
[2] Shils, M.E., M. Shike, A.C. Ross, B. Caballero, and R.J. Cousins. 2005. Modern nutrition in health and Disease. Lippincott, Williams, and Wilkins.
[3] Elmadfa, I. and I. Singer. 2009. Vitamin B-12 and homocysteine status among vegetarians: a global perspective. Am.J. Clin. Nutr. 89(suppl):1693S-1698S