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Rice Protein Offers Identical Benefits to Whey

CULVER CITY, Calif.—Rice protein offers identical benefits to dairy-based whey protein for muscle growth and repair, according to a new study published in the *Nutrition Journal*.

Researchers at the University of Tampa used Growing Naturals' Organic Rice Protein made with Axiom Food's Oryzatein® and followed 24 college-aged, resistance-trained participants, observing how they built muscle and experienced rates of repair and soreness.

Participants were randomly and equally divided into two groups. Each group consumed 48 grams of rice or whey protein isolate immediately following training (on training days only). The participants followed a specific training protocol three times per week for eight weeks, and the supplements taken contained equal amounts of calories and protein. Before and after the first training session, participants gave ratings for perceived recovery, soreness and readiness to train. At baseline, week four, and week eight, participants were measured for muscle thickness, body composition, bench press and leg press strength.

Researchers found rice protein consumed after resistance exercise decreased fat-mass and increased lean body mass, skeletal muscle hypertrophy, power and strength compared to whey protein.

"In the past, studies have shown that the combination of resistance exercise with consumption of animal-derived protein (such as whey, casein, eggs, meat) has had a different effect on muscle growth than when resistance exercise was paired with plant-based protein such as soy," said Ralf Jaeger, FISSN, CISSN, MBA. "The results of this study show, for the first time, this has changed."

Results showed there were no significant differences in ratings between the groups supplemented with rice versus whey for recovery. Both groups experienced significant changes in body composition, strength and power during the eight weeks.

"Whey protein has been the gold standard of the fitness industry, but as of today, that may be changing," said David Janow, JD/MBA, CEO of Axiom Foods, Inc. "Intolerance to lactose affects nearly 70% of the world's population. Hormones used in cow farming are passed on in larger concentrations through dairy products than through cow meat. We've heard how hormones in cow milk are affecting early puberty. Soy protein is losing popularity after learning about phytoestrogens. Allergen-free plant-based protein is now being shown to rival whey protein."