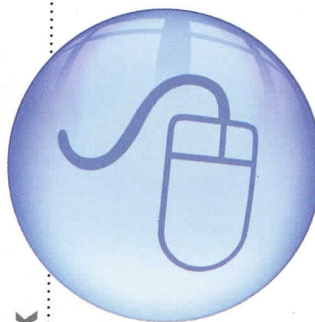


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SPORTS INDUSTRY UNITES TO OPPOSE VAT



Industry is called upon to get behind a campaign to oppose the introduction of VAT on sports nutrition drinks. **PAGE 4.**

Product Watch SPRING



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The sector demonstrates that innovation is alive and well

Changing face of the trade
Retailers from across the health food spectrum debate how to adapt to meet the changing needs of consumers

The independent fight
The role that independents play in reclaiming our high streets

INNOVATION AT ITS BEST

The economic outlook has not stopped this industry innovating. Quite the opposite, as we bring you a range of new product launches in our bi-annual Product Watch supplement. **PAGE 23.**

BOOSTING SKINCARE SALES



Health Food Business takes a closer look at the trends we're seeing in the natural beauty market – and what we can expect in the coming months. **PAGE 38.**

NEW AD CAMPAIGN STARTING NOW!

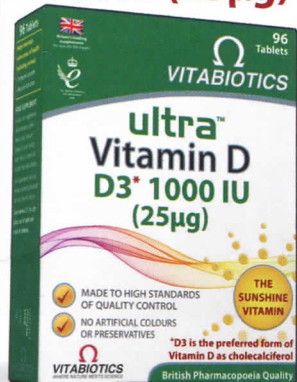


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THE BIG STORY

Researchers confirm seaweed as salt alternative and potential in weight management

Seaweed could play an important role in cutting our concerning salt levels, researchers have found.

A team at Sheffield Hallam University discovered that seaweed-enriched bread is not only an acceptable alternative to salt used in bread, but it can also contribute to weight loss and management.

The study was carried out at the university's Centre for Food Innovation and supported by the Seaweed Health Foundation, and found that people who ate bread that was enriched with Seagreens' *Ascophyllum nodosum* seaweed were less hungry and consumed fewer calories compared to when they ate 'normal' bread in an identical test a week later.

During the study, the researchers tested the effect of the seaweed-enriched bread eaten at breakfast time on energy intake at lunchtime in 12 overweight but healthy men. Over the course of the morning, their blood glucose and blood cholesterol were tested, as were their ratings of hunger and fullness.

At lunch, they ate a meal of pasta and a tomato-based sauce, and what they ate was weighed. After eating the seaweed-enriched bread, it was noted that they ate significantly less energy at lunchtime, some 178 calories less, compared to the control bread.

Energy intake was reduced over the following 24 hours yet blood glucose and blood cholesterol stayed much the same which, the researchers suggested, could mean seaweed acted as a bulking agent.

Study leader, Anna Hall, said: "This study shows that in the short term, consumption of this bread reduces energy intake which, in the long term may contribute to weight loss or weight management. We hope to undertake long-term trials, which are needed in order to potentially produce such results."

Dr Craig Rose, from the Seaweed Health Foundation, added: "Seaweed for food and health is a rapidly emerging trend, with multiple benefits from a sustainable and underutilised resource."



Beetroot juice "significantly" reduces blood pressure in study

Researchers have discovered that beetroot juice may reduce blood pressure.

The results of a new study revealed that people who drank the juice, or who ate beetroot-enriched bread, could cut their blood pressure due to the vegetable's high nitrate content.

Two randomly-controlled, single-blind crossover trials were carried out, with ambulatory blood pressure (BP) measured over a 24-hour period following consumption of either four doses of beetroot juice (BJ), or three bread products; control bread with no beetroot, and red beetroot, and white beetroot-enriched breads. Total urinary nitrate was measured at the start, and at two, four and 24 hours after consumption.

It was found that beetroot juice consumption significantly lowered systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure over a period of 24 hours compared with water. The bread products enriched with 100g of red or white beetroot also lowered both these markers over the same period.

"These studies demonstrated significant hypotensive effects of a low dose (100g) of beetroot which was unaffected by processing or the presence of betacyanins," the researchers concluded. "These data strengthen the evidence for cardioprotective BP-lowering effects of dietary nitrate-rich vegetables."



DIARY DATES

WHAT'S ON

● National Walking Month (May)

The charity Living Streets is encouraging people across the country to join in the Great British walking challenge, designed to show people how enjoyable and rewarding walking can be.

● National Smile Month (May 20)

This oral health campaign takes place every year with the aim being to improve oral health in the UK. Visit www.nationalsmilemonth.org for more.

● National Vegetarian Week (May 21-27)

The UK's annual awareness-

raising campaign promotes inspirational vegetarian food and the benefits of a meat-free lifestyle. Visit www.nationalvegetarianweek.org

MAY IS...

● Coeliac UK Awareness Week (May 14-20)

This year's Awareness Week takes on the theme of The Gluten-free Challenge, in which people are encouraged to raise awareness among eateries of the issues facing sufferers of coeliac disease. Visit www.coeliac.org.uk

Supplementation during pregnancy and the impact on birth weight

A new study has backed up the view that early supplementation in pregnancy can increase foetal growth.

The trial, the results of which have been published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, saw just over 1,000 pregnancies included in the study, in which researchers assessed the association between cumulative

micronutrient intake (CMI) and foetal growth through observing tablet intake.

The idea was to ascertain whether prenatal multiple micronutrients (UNIMMAP) improved foetal growth only moderately in comparison to iron and folic acid (IFA).

It was found that the odds of

delivering a small-for-gestational-age baby were reduced by 21 per cent for each additional tertile of CMI, with a higher gradient observed later in pregnancy.

The researchers said: "In conclusion, for both IFA and UNIMMAP, the effect on foetal growth is cumulative. The supplementation should therefore



begin as early as possible in pregnancy, even if the growth increment per CMI is higher in late than in early pregnancy. Women with a low BMI should also receive extra energy."