



PANTRY Post

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Double the Size!

Due to the increasing interest in information on natural products, this issue has been doubled in size. By the way anyone interested in a glitzy approach then the current BBC2 science series on Tuesday evenings is but another example of how nature is able to produce far more complex and hence effective compounds than existing chemical manufacture!

More Local Produce

As you know we believe in the importance of offering local produce to Sue's Pantry customers, so we were delighted to hear Gundenham Dairy in Wellington had won Radio 4's farming award and were extending their delivery area. This ensures milk is supplied to us within 24 hours of leaving the cow!

We also enjoyed our recent visit to River Cottage HQ to hear more about Hugh's pursuit of the best of local produce. The key requirement for inclusion under the River Cottage label was a commitment by producers to natural and organic husbandry in order to provide seasonal produce unrivalled in its quality and integrity - though we are still waiting to hear when the next batch of bacon is due!



Whilst not to local recipes, we have added to our range of Sue's Pantry pickles and chutneys various authentic cooking-sauces from around the world. These are made locally using only the finest ingredients to give flavours as good as the chutneys and pickles. They are: Tamaca, a Mediterranean sauce made with sun dried tomatoes; Shantou, a light lemon sauce with stem ginger from China; Samui, a classic mild Thai made with coconut; Makhani, a mild creamy Punjabi dish; Kadhi, a

classic medium North Indian recipe with a rich taste of ginger and corriander; and Cajun, tomato and spices with a smokey taste from the Southern USA!

A selection of our sauces and jams



You may be interested to know that in addition to the benefit of buying local seasonal produce, a report in August from the New Economics Foundation concluded that every £1 spent with a local supplier was worth £1.76 to the local economy.

Is Sugar Really That Bad for You?

Sugar is virtually devoid of any key vitamins and minerals. While it contains 16 calories per teaspoon, it has no B vitamins, chromium, magnesium, zinc or other trace minerals that the body needs to digest and metabolise sugar. Thus, to fully move it through your digestive system, your body has to use B vitamins and other trace minerals from the "real" food you eat, or from vitamins and minerals that your body is storing for future use. As a result, sugar essentially robs your body of these beneficial nutrients.

Your immune system is made up of numerous antibodies which attack foreign invaders. Medical studies have found that antibody production drops after people have as little as 18 grams of sugar, about as much as you would find in half of a can of regular fizzy drink! Sugar interferes with the cells of the immune system. Eating just 70 grams of sugar can result in a 50% reduction in the ability of the white blood cells to destroy viruses and bacteria for up to five hours.

Due to the need to use up your body's minerals, eating sugar can cause a chromium deficiency, copper deficiency, and can interfere with absorption of calcium and magnesium - an imbalance which can cause hyperactivity, anxiety, concentration difficulties.

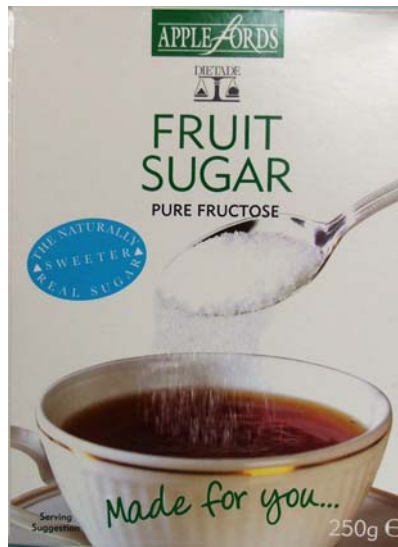
Sugar may also be disguised with an alias such as corn syrup, cornstarch or high fructose corn syrup - which is put in many "healthy" alternative fizzy drinks, and is actually corn treated with an acid to make a sugar!

What of the Alternatives to Sugar?

You may have also read recently about the link between cancer and the omnipresent artificial sweetener, aspartame - present in more than 6,000 food and drink products currently on retailers' shelves. Whilst this has been suspected for years, research in Italy has shown animals fed on it developed leukemia and lymphoma; studies linking aspartame to cancer date back to the early 1980's.

Aspartame is also known as NutraSweet, Equal, Canderel, Nothing Comes Closer to Sugar, and Half Spoon...to name but a few. Other alternatives use sucralose, which research has linked to shrinkage of the thymus gland when fed to animals. Similar studies to those on aspartame have linked saccharin to bladder cancer and as a

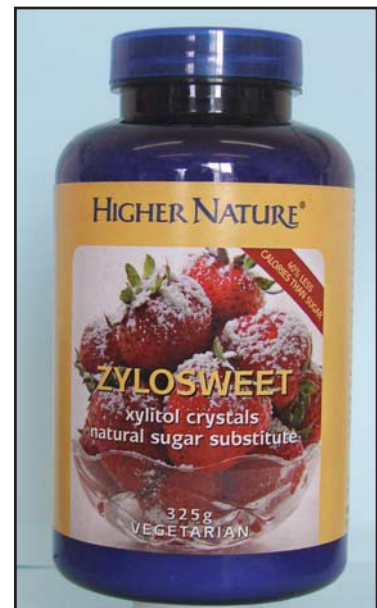
consequence the Food & Drug Administration in the USA proposed a ban on it in 1977.



Fructose is fruit sugar and although naturally occurring has the same number of calories as sugar but has 174% of the sweetness so one can use about one third less! It does have a GI value of only 29, but recent research has shown that

fructose is more readily converted to fat by the body than regular sugar!

Xylitol is one of the best alternatives. It is another naturally occurring sugar which not only looks and tastes just like sugar - it is actually good for you as it is tooth friendly and helps maintain teeth free from decay! We stock Higher Nature's version known as Zylosweet. It is ideal for anyone on the GI/GL diet with a GI value of just 7, and has 40% less calories and 75% less available



carbohydrates than sugar. There have been hundreds of human studies carried out on xylitol and it has been seen to promote healthy teeth and its use is advocated by dentists around the world. Furthermore recent research has even shown it might help with the absorption of calcium to help people avoid osteoporosis. Also because Zylosweet cannot be used by yeasts it will not encourage yeast overgrowth such as candida.

Please look out for the special offers we will be having during Fairtrade fortnight from 6th to 19th March and then Natural Health week from 27th March to 2nd April.

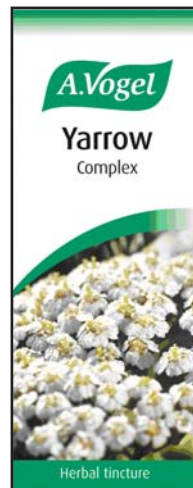
Digestive Enzymes

A recent survey by Optimum Nutrition UK revealed that a large number of people suffer from digestive problems, with symptoms ranging from constipation and or diarrhoea to abdominal pain, wind and bloating. One of the major reasons for indigestion is insufficient production of the digestive enzymes required to breakdown our food. This results in incompletely digested food lingering in the small intestine, which feed the bacteria living there. These bacteria produce gas, resulting in bloating, flatulence and digestive pain.

Each of the three main enzymes acts on a specific type of food and many people are lacking enzymes because of inadequate diets, over refined foods, environmental toxins and poor health. The first step to take if you suffer from indigestion is to supplement with digestive enzymes. Probiotics deliver friendly bacteria to the gut whereas prebiotics stimulate the body's existing good bacteria. The best known of these is fructo-oligosaccharide or FOS. A recent trial at the University of Reading found that FOS supplementation significantly reduced the population of the less beneficial bacteria. Manuka honey is also becoming



better known for its prebiotic action as in addition to its antibacterial properties it also encourages the growth of the friendly bacteria in the gut. A good probiotic will contain billions of live bacteria, hence why it should be kept in the refrigerator, and we stock a variety of products to assist in bolstering the levels of health promoting good bugs in your digestive tract!



For those needing relief from digestion problems, Yarrow helps from entrance to exit! It is medicinally effective throughout, helping with everything from indigestion or food intolerances to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). It is usually found in combination with other herbs such as dandelion and centaury as both herbs are bitter tonics that enhance liver function and bile production. A mix containing all these herbs could help with everything from wind and bloating to stomach cramps.

If you do suffer from digestive health issues such as IBS, coeliac, colitis or Crohn's disease, then do not overlook aloe vera. This has been known for years as a powerful anti-inflammatory. It contains a number of enzymes that aid digestion and long-chain sugars that help to re-balance the digestive system.

Feeding Minds

A new report produced by the food campaign group Sustain and the Mental Health Foundation ("MHF") emphasises once again the way food is now produced has altered the balance of key nutrients that people consume. Dr. Andrew McCulloch, chief executive of the MHF told the BBC "We are only just beginning to understand how the brain as an organ is influenced by nutrients it derives from the foods we eat and how diets have an impact on our mental health". He added that addressing mental health problems with changes in diet was already showing better results than drugs or counselling.

The report highlights how lower intake of omega-3 fatty acids due to declining fish consumption and reduced consumption of fresh vegetables could be linked to depression, schizophrenia, ADHD and Alzheimer's.



Which whilst mentioning omega-3, do not forget that products such as organic yoghurt and meat from grass fed animals are also high in this essential fatty acid.

Interestingly Mind, the mental health charity, is well aware of this link as in 1997 it launched its Food and Mood project. In addition to avoiding artificial additives, which can cause a range of food sensitivity reactions, one of the key factors in maintaining good mental health is to avoid added sugar, which can cause a sudden blood sugar rise followed by a dip in mood and energy an hour or so later. Deborah Colson, co-author of "Optimum Nutrition for Your Child's Mind" recommends a diet rich in vitamins and minerals: "All vitamins and minerals are important but the one that is most deficient in people with mind health problems are the B vitamins, zinc and magnesium".

Circulation

Those of you who watched the BBC 2 programme at the beginning of February will have seen the conclusion with regard to ginkgo biloba.

It has been used by the Chinese for centuries and shown in research to benefit microcirculation, making it easier for the blood to flow into the furthest veins in the body. It also stabilises the small arteries and capillaries, reducing the way the walls are attacked by free radicals and thus preventing the walls being broken down. It reduces the stickiness of the platelets in the blood, making the blood less thick and turgid. The overall effect is that it is easier for the blood to flow around the body effectively, so increasing the delivery of red and white blood cells around



the body. This means better memory, better concentration, less tiredness, less dizziness or giddiness, warmer hands and feet and better erectile function! It potentially helps tinnitus and dementia as well. Though remember **NOT** to take ginkgo biloba if you are taking an anticoagulant such as aspirin or warfarin.

Ginger is a good alternative if you cannot take ginkgo biloba. It is a blood tonic and whilst it may not be as effective as ginkgo biloba at warming the extremities, it has the added advantage of reducing inflammation in the body at the same time.

Snippets

Comfrey - A trial on 164 patients with sprained ankles showed comfrey root extract ointment reduces pain, inflammation and swelling and is at least as effective as ibuprofen and diclofenac. Fresh comfrey leaves and root, also known as 'knit-bone', have been used for centuries to treat broken bones. Its leaves and root contain allantoin, an anti-inflammatory protein thought to stimulate cells.

Feverfew - Researchers at the University of Essen have confirmed that the herb feverfew can reduce migraine. Tested on 170 patients, it was found to cut the number of attacks they suffered by almost 40%. Previous studies have suggested it stops the body producing substances known to trigger inflammation, is effective against arthritis, eases menstrual cramps and lowers blood pressure.

Ginseng - A recent study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal has shown that supplementing with **ginseng** may in fact be key to reducing the number of colds. The dose used in this trial was 2 x 200mg capsules of North American Ginseng extract after breakfast daily for four months.

Plastic bags - some 500 billion plastic carrier bags are used world wide each year - one million per second. 12 million barrels of oil are needed to make them! As you know we are always happy to assist in recycling them!



A selection from our range of supplements

Sex and circulation - L-arginine is a popular ingredient in libido enhancing formulas as it works for both men and women. For men with erectile dysfunction problems 2-3 gms seems to be helpful in the majority of cases, and if used regularly can help lower cholesterol while reducing the negative effects of low density lipoproteins. For women, similar levels are required and in trials showed very impressive results - probably due to enhanced blood flow!

Selenium - Researchers at the Arizona Cancer Centre, University of Arizona have reported analysis from three randomised trials on patients diagnosed with cancer. This showed that those taking selenium had 37% fewer cancers of any type than the others, and the benefits were obvious within two years. Over the length of the ten year trial, there was a 63% reduction in prostate cancers, 58% fewer cases of cancer of the colon and 46% fewer cases of lung cancer. Those who benefited most were those who originally had the lowest selenium levels. It is worth noting that selenium levels in the UK are generally lower than in the USA due to grains, as used for bread making, being grown on depleted soils. Good sources of selenium are brazil nuts, wheatgerm, brown rice and garlic to name but a few.

Vitamin D - researchers at the University of California have found that increasing the intake of vitamin D to five times the recommended amount (5ug) can reduce the risk of cancer by as much as half. Sunlight is the source of the vitamin D we need to create naturally within ourselves, hence one study showed gardeners to have lower cancer rates!