



THIS MONTH ▶Lentils **4** ▶Natural, but ... **7** ▶My shift with Daisy **9** ▶Vitamin E **10**

Why our honey is so special

OUR HONEY IS SPECIAL, PURE AND SIMPLE. IT'S PRODUCED BY BEEKEEPERS WHO SPECIALISE IN HONEYS THAT REFLECT AUSTRALIA'S UNIQUE NATIVE FLORA AND ARE UNAVAILABLE ANYWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD.

Those beekeepers, the Malfroys, have been keeping bees commercially for more than 35 years, and they endeavour to maintain natural and sustainable beekeeping practices.

Though based in the Central Tablelands of NSW, as migratory beekeepers, they move their beehives around the state, seeking the best possible nectar and pollen for their bees. This is important for Australian beekeepers, because there can be an abundance of nectar in one area in one year followed by many years of little or no nectar. Beekeepers need to be well-attuned to the geography and seasonal

conditions of each region and the various flowering patterns of Australia's diverse flora.

After moving the bees, their condition is regularly monitored. If there's an excess of honey, the Malfroy's take the honey back to their extracting plant where the honey is spun out of the frames. As the honey is naturally clean there's no need for excessive filtering, and the honey is simply left to settle ▶**2**



what's good in fruit+veg with Renata Field

NEW ARRIVALS

- ▶ MANDARINS: Juicy FD produce, high in vitamin C, to keep colds away.
- ▶ PEAS: Either lightly steamed or peeled and fresh in salads.
- ▶ POMELO: Like a grapefruit but bigger and sweeter.
- ▶ SAPOTE: Custard ice cream in a fruit. Wait until soft and squishy to enjoy.
- ▶ WASABI GREENS: A green with a serious bite! Use in salads or lightly stir-fry.

ON THEIR WAY OUT

- ▶ CAPSICUM: Still crisp and juicy.
- ▶ GRAPES: Approaching the end.

- ▶ PERSIMMON: Delicious right now! Perfectly ripe when soft and squishy.
- ▶ TOMATOES: End of the season nearing
- ▶ ZUCCHINI: Going out of season

WHAT'S GOOD NOW

- ▶ APPLES: Everyone's favourites Fujis and Pink ladies are in, as well as FD heritage apples from the Bathurst region.
- ▶ BROCCOLI: Crisp and tasty Victorian produce.
- ▶ CAULIFLOWER: Raw or cooked.
- ▶ CHILLIES: Fresh, spicy local FD produce.
- ▶ CORN: Farm fresh, sweet and delicious!
- ▶ HERBS: Fresh herbs, basil, parsley,

- thyme, sage, dill and more. In the fridge.
- ▶ JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE: See this month's recipe for more details.
- ▶ KALE: Use this highly nutritious green in place of silverbeet.
- ▶ KIWIFRUIT: Local FD produce.
- ▶ PEARS: Victorian, Biodynamic Packhams and beautiful red-skinned Sensation pears.
- ▶ RHUBARB: Bake with new season apples.
- ▶ POTATOES: Local FD Sebagos and Dutch Creams from Tasmania
- ▶ SQUASH: Try stuffed or baked.
- ▶ ZUCCHINI: Perfect right now.

Renata

and then bottled. The honey is not overheated in the process, and isn't blended or micro-filtered in the extraction or packaging process, keeping its naturally-occurring minerals, enzymes and pollens intact. By virtue of where it is produced, the resulting honey is naturally organic, and free of any chemicals or additives.

The Malfroys do their own production and packing, thereby guaranteeing the honey is of premium quality and true to the purity of the variety. This is also due to their strong and healthy bee colonies, access to prime honey country across NSW, and their knowledge of bees and Australian flora. The varieties of honey vary seasonally, depending on where the best honey flows are. Currently we stock Silky Oak and Salvation Jane honey but these are about to change over to Hawkesbury Ironbark, which we may have in the shop by the time the eNews reaches you.



SALVATION JANE (*Echium Plantagineum*) is a very light, mild honey with a tendency to crystallise, so it's often used in cooking and drinks. It will be replaced by Yellowbox in the next few months.

YELLOWBOX (*Eucalyptus Melliodora*) is widely-regarded as Australia's finest varietal honey, It has a sweet, mild flavour with a characteristic floral aroma. It's very slow

they're fortunate to witness Australia's flora in all its diverse and striking forms. That diversity, our favourable climate, the large areas of remnant vegetation found throughout the country, coupled with the continent's physical isolation, makes Australia a virtual bee paradise. The Malfroys passion for working with bees comes from the free nature of a beekeeper's lifestyle, the lure of the Australian bush, the melding of ancient



to crystallise, and has a low GI rating. This honey is

collected from **THE MALROYS IN ACTION** the Central Tablelands of NSW.

In their experience, the Malfroys are constantly amazed by the wider community's interest in bees and beekeeping. As most types of Australian native 'honey' trees are heavily reliant on specific seasonal conditions to flower, it is necessary for beekeepers to regularly scout the countryside for the best spots to locate their hives and take advantage of the abundance of nectar when it does occur and will then move when the honey flow ends.

The constantly changing scenery is one of the joys of beekeeping. As the Malfroys travel around the countryside,

traditions and modern advancement in bee knowledge, and the satisfaction gained in working alongside their own bees to produce a universally-loved natural food. In their own words, "there seems to be some deep connection in all of us to the magic and mystery of bees and honey . . . It is truly a global connection that stretches back through the ages."

For an insight into their lifestyle as Australian migratory beekeepers, check out the slideshow at www.malfroysgold.com.au/slideshow1.html.

HAWKESBURY IRONBARK comes from the edge of the Wollemi Wilderness area. The Hawkesbury Ironbarks – Northern Grey Ironbark, Red Ironbark, Narrow Leaved Ironbark – all flower at same time, giving the honey a lovely mellow, sweet flavour, not dissimilar in many ways to Silky Oak, which comes from the same region.

SILKY OAK (*Grevillea Robusta*) is a natural blend of Spring honeys from Silky Oak and Forest Red Gum trees in the Hawkesbury region at the foothills of the Blue Mountains. A very pleasant mellow flavoured honey, with a soft finish.

POSITIONS VACANT Two spots on the MC

There are two vacancies on the co-op's board, known as the Management Committee (MC). If you'd like to help shape the direction of Alfalfa House, why not join? To find out more, including Directors' Duties and the minutes from the meetings, go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/who_are_we.htm . If you'd like to chat to an MC member about it, email coordinator@alfalfahouse.org .

PRICEWATCH

Product	Alfalfa House* Cert. Organic	Health Food Store Cert. Organic	Supermarket Cert. Organic	Supermarket Not Organic
Feta, 100g	\$3.06	\$4.30	\$3.30	\$3.02
Pumpkin, 100g	\$0.12	\$0.30	\$0.35	\$0.24
Pinenuts, 100g	\$6.15	\$12.30	NA	\$14.84
Parsley, bunch	\$2.55	\$3.00	NA	\$1.98
Toothpaste, Weleda, tube	\$9.00	\$11.00	NA	NA

SURVEY NUMBER 9, JUNE 2009 ■ NA: not available

*PRICES ARE WITH THE BASIC 10% MEMBER DISCOUNT.

– Compiled by Jo Rose

**MASSIVE
STOREWIDE
3-DAY
PRE-STOCKTAKE
SALE**

20% OFF

EVERYTHING IN THE SHOP

SUNDAY JUNE 28

MONDAY JUNE 29

TUESDAY JUNE 30

THE FINE PRINT: Not valid with any other discount including cost price stock, pre-paid orders or bulk orders.

The lowdown on lentils

Lentils, peas and pulses add an undeniable range of flavours and textures to our culinary repertoire. Low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, legumes are also an important source of protein for vegetarians and when eaten with cereals, easily match animal-based sources. This month we look at lentils, next month peas and pulses.



LENTILS

Lentils are the seeds of a bushy, annual grain-bearing legume (or pulse), *Lens culinaris*. These seeds are usually allowed to dry on the plant before harvesting and processing by grinding to separate the seeds. Lentils are nutty and earthy, varying in colour from green to brown; the orange-coloured red lentil is tiny and, often already skinned and split, has a subtle spicy flavour.

The lentil most likely originated in southwest Europe and temperate Asia. The earliest references date from Greek caves 13,000 years ago. They're among the first plants to be domesticated along with wheat and barley. A Hindu proverb notes "rice is good but lentils are my life." The red lentil is the oldest known variety of these beans. Chinese archaeologists uncovered containers of red lentils from Han tombs and it appears the red lentil was in use in China well over 2000 years ago. Ancient Egyptians used red lentils and they have also been discovered in Bronze Age lake settlements in Switzerland, indicating their presence and use were widespread. Since then lentils have had something of a chequered history, being regarded by most western civilisations as the poor-man's meat substitute. Historically, Catholics used lentils during lent, if they could not afford fish. In South Asia, the large vegetarian population makes it an essential protein source with a short cooking time. Perhaps the best evidence of the importance of the lentil is the number of varieties there are.

Lentils have an impressive range of nutrients including iron, selenium, folate, manganese, magnesium, zinc, phosphorus and some B vitamins (B1, B3, B6). They are extremely low in fat, richer in protein than most pulses, and are reputed to be important in fighting heart disease by reducing harmful LDL cholesterol in the body. Lentils also have a higher protein content than beef. Whole lentils are high in fibre, which aids the functioning of the bowels and the colon. Fibre also slows down the rate at which sugar enters the bloodstream, providing a steady supply of energy, which can help control diabetes.

Although lentils and peas can be kept for a long time, for best flavour and colour, use them within a year as they toughen with time and older ones will take longer to cook. Look for bright, smooth-skinned unwrinkled pulses that do not look dusty and store in airtight containers in a cool dark place.

TO COOK, pick over lentils and remove small stones and debris and rinse in a sieve with cold running water to remove grit. They do not require soaking, though can be soaked in cold water for 1–2 hours if desired. Place lentils in a pan with at least three times their volume in water and bring to boil. Skim off the surface froth and simmer gently for 20–30 minutes (red split lentils) or 30–60 minutes (others). Don't add salt to the cooking water as it toughens the lentils and prevents them from softening,

instead season when cooked. Lentils will double in size once cooked and will last about three days in the fridge or six months in the freezer. Use for soups, purees, and casseroles; use split red lentils for Indian dahl. Whole lentils can be used in salads and are also suitable for sprouting if they have not been heat treated. All types of lentils can be used for vegetarian loaves and crumb-coated patties.

SPLIT RED LENTILS

These lentils are the small, round biconvex lens shaped, orange to red in colour and are sold skinned and split. They are also known as masoor dahl and Egyptian lentils and have a spicy flavour. They cook quickly in just 20 minutes and do not hold their shape well as they eventually disintegrate into a thick yellow puree. Red split lentils make excellent curries, purees and soups as they break down easily. They are also ideal for thickening casseroles and when mixed with spice make a delicious dhal. In the Middle East, red or yellow lentils are cooked and mixed with spices and formed into vegetable balls known as kofte.

WHOLE RED LENTILS

These lentils are lens-shaped, orange to red in colour. They cook quickly and do not hold their shape well so make excellent curries, purees and soups.

BELUGA BLACK LENTILS

These are a tiny in size – one of the smallest of the lentil family – and have a rich earthy flavour, soft texture and are easy to cook. They are good in soups and salads or served with pasta or rice and their deep colour provides a striking contrast to coloured vegetables.

TO COOK add 1 cup of lentils to 2–3 cups of water, boil for 2 minutes then simmer for 30 minutes or until soft.

GREEN (OR BROWN) LENTILS

This lentil is very popular in India where it's called dahl. They take longer to cook than split lentils (about 40–45 minutes) and are ideal for adding to warm salads, casseroles and stuffings and are often used in hearty dishes. They retain their shape when cooked, but can also be cooked and blended with herbs or spices to make a paté.

PUY AND FRENCH GREEN LENTILS

The traditional French lentil is 1/2cm wide, darkened skinned, greeny-blue marbled in colour with a peppery taste and mild earthy flavour. True Puy lentils are from Puy, in the Auvergne region of central France and are considered to have the best texture and taste of all the lentils. They hold their bead-like shape, turning brown when cooked, but due to their firm texture may take longer to cook than regular lentils. They are a versatile lentil and perfect for winter soups, warm salads, curries, pilaffs, stuffing and stir-fry. They're also good braised in wine and flavoured with fresh herbs, particularly rosemary. Mix with breadcrumbs and use to stuff capsicums or eggplant. Blend with couscous and use as a bed for grilled vegetables. Toss cooked and chilled lentils and diced roasted vegetables with a little olive oil and season to taste.

RECIPES

Gardener's Pie

This is a vegan version of Shepherd's Pie.

SERVES 6. GLUTEN-FREE

- 1 cup green lentils
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tbsp oil
- 1 large onion, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1 stick celery, sliced
- 1 carrot finely sliced
- 1/2 cup broccoli florets
- 1 tbsp miso
- 1 tbsp tamari
- 3/4 cup vegetable stock
- 1 tsp mixed herbs
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 3 tpb tomato paste
- 2 1/2 cups mashed potato

METHOD

- 1 Soak lentils for 2 hours or overnight, drain and rinse.
- 2 Place in large saucepan, add fresh water and bring to boil, add onion



SPICY TOMATO AND LENTIL SOUP

powder and simmer 15 minutes or until tender and drain.

3 Heat oil in a large saucepan and sauté onion, garlic and mushrooms for 5 mins.

4 Add vegetables and sauté 5 mins. Add lentils, tamari, miso, vegetable stock, herbs and tomato paste. Stir over heat until combined and simmer 5 mins, mixture should be fairly thick.

5 Turn into a 5cm deep dish, top with mashed potato. Mark attractively with a fork and brown in a hot oven 15 mins.

6 Serve with side vegetables or salad.

Spicy tomato and lentil soup

SERVES 6. VEGAN, GLUTEN-FREE

- 1 large brown onion
- 1 clove garlic
- oil for frying
- 810g can diced tomatoes or fresh, skinned
- 125g red split lentils (dry weight)
- 2 cups vegetable stock
- chilli powder and/or flakes to taste
- black pepper, freshly ground
- 2 tbsp dried rosemary dried
- salt to taste
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- fresh herbs (parsley, shallots and/or basil) to taste

METHOD

1 Peel and finely chop onion and garlic. Fry onion in oil and add garlic when it starts to carmelise.

2 Rinse lentils, drain and add to onion, garlic and oil mix and stir through so they are lightly-coated.

3 Add tomatoes and break up slightly – lentil mix should rapidly absorb liquid.

4 Stir in stock, add pepper, chilli and rosemary. Bring to boil, cover and simmer for 30 mins until lentils are tender.

5 Blend until smooth and return to pan and heat through for a few minutes.

6 Just before serving, stir in balsamic vinegar and adjust seasoning as needed. Chop fresh herbs, add half to soup and mix through. Serve garnished with remaining herbs and toasted bread.

Kedgere

SERVES 3. GLUTEN-FREE. VEGAN VERSION:

REPLACE BUTTER WITH COCONUT OIL

This spicy lentil and rice dish is a variation of the original Indian version of kedgere, kitchiri. Serve as is or top with quartered hard-boiled eggs. Also delicious served on grilled large field mushrooms.

- 1/4 cup black Beluga lentils, rinsed
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup basmati rice, rinsed
- 4 cloves
- 4 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp curry powder
- 1/2 tsp mild chilli powder
- 2 tbsp flat parsley leaf, chopped
- salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, quated (optional)

METHOD

1 Put lentils in a saucepan, add bay leaf and cover with cold water. Bring to boil, skim off any foam, reduce heat. Cover and simmer 25–30 mins until tender.

2 Drain, then discard bay leaf.

3 Meanwhile, place rice in a saucepan and cover with 2 cups boiling water. Add cloves and a good pinch of salt. Simmer covered for 10–15 mins, until all water has been absorbed and rice is tender.

4 Discard cloves. Melt butter/oil over a gentle heat in large frying pan, then add curry and chilli and cook for 1 min.

5 Stir in lentils and rice and mix well until coated in the spiced butter/oil.

6 Season and cook for 1–2 mins until heated through. Stir in the parsley and serve with the hard boiled eggs, if using.

Lentil-Walnut Dip

SERVES 6. VEGAN, GLUTEN-FREE

- 1 cup French "puy" lentils
- 1 cup whole walnuts
- 2 small cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp lime or lemon juice
- sea salt

METHOD

Cook the lentils until soft. Drain off the water. Fill 1/2 of your blender with the lentils. blend till smooth. Fill 1/4 of the blender with walnuts and add one clove garlic, pre-pressed or chopped. Blend till smooth, using the spatula to aid the mixing when necessary. If more liquid is needed, add some olive oil and/or lime juice transfer to stainless steel bowl. Repeat with rest of ingredients. Add any remaining olive oil and lime juice and mix with spatula. Add sea salt in small increments and blend and taste until the

dip has the desired saltiness. If storing the dip, smooth the top surface with a spatula and add some more olive oil to seal the surface before adding top or plastic wrap

Spaghetti Bolognese

SERVES 4. VEGAN, GLUTEN-FREE

A rich vegan alternative to traditional Spaghetti Bolognese.

- 1 cup red split lentils
- 1 medium-size onion, chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small chilli, seeded and finely chopped (optional)
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 capsicum, finely chopped
- 1 x 415g tin diced tomatoes
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 2 tbsp tamari sauce
- 1 cup water
- 300g spaghetti (or other pasta)
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped basil leaves

METHOD

- 1 Rinse lentils until water runs clear, set aside.
- 2 In a medium-size saucepan stir-fry onion in olive oil until tender. Add chilli, garlic and capsicum and stir-fry until capsicum is tender. Keep heat to a minimum, taking care not to burn garlic.
- 3 Add crushed tomatoes, oregano, tomato paste, tamari, water and lentils, and stir well over medium heat until sauce is simmering. Cover and simmer for 20 mins or until lentils are soft. Stir occasionally, taking care not to let lentils gather on bottom of pan.
- 4 Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, bring some water to the boil and add spaghetti. Cook until tender stirring occasionally. Before serving, stir basil into sauce and spoon over spaghetti.

REFERENCES BOOKS

- What Food is That and How Healthy is It?* Jo Rogers 1995
The Cooks Book of Ingredients Margaret Brooker 2005
Wholefoods: A Cook's Kitchen Handbook Nicola Graimes 2004

REFERENCES WEBSITES

- www.goodness.com.au/store/Beans,-Peas-and-Pulses
<http://thoughtfulfoods.org.au/ingredientoftheweek/lentils>
www.cliffordawright.com/history/lentils.html
www.foodsubs.com/Lentils.html
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lentil>
<http://theppk.com/recipes/dbrecipes/index.php?RecipeID=120>

WHAT'S NEW

- ▶ Organic black beluga lentils, see pages 4-6 for more details
- ▶ Fig and macadamia nut chunks from Kitz Living Foods
- ▶ Olive oil soaps from Natural Extracts - lavender, spearmint, grapefruit, orange ginseng, goatsmilk and indigenous flavours
- ▶ Almond and vanilla-flavoured Bibba Bikkies
- ▶ Organic bread mix
- ▶ Organic wholemeal spaghetti
- ▶ Coconut oil/butter is now certified organic and from Loving Earth
- ▶ Organic amaranth flour replaces quinoa flour until it returns

WHAT'S BACK

- ▶ New season Australian organic sultanas
- ▶ New season organic dried nectarines from Young, NSW
- ▶ Hawkesbury Ironbark honey has replaced Silky oak honey, see pages 1-2 for more details
- ▶ As the supply of roasted almonds and cashews has stabilised, both nut butters are back.
- ▶ New season organic Aussie apricots

WHAT'S OUT OR GONE

- ▶ Dried cranberries, waiting for new season sometime around mid-July.
- ▶ Australia's Own malt-free soy milk is unavailable at our supplier. We have Pureharvest malt-free soy milk instead.
- ▶ Toothbrushes and replacement heads are on their way across the ocean. We expect them back late June or early July.

– Monika Baumann, Groceries Coordinator

for the diary

Saturday June 13 starts 10am

Climate Change Rally

Barangaroo, Hickson Road, Millers Point
 Wear red for urgency.

Thursday July 16 evening

Alfalfa House Film Night

Screening 'The Real Dirt on Farmer John'

at the Red Rattler, Marrickville. Full details next issue and soon on the News page of our website (www.alfalfahouse.org)

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SPEND \$60 IN JUNE AND GET A JAR OF JAM

Don't forget to pick up your free Alfalfa House calendar next time you're shopping or print your own (www.alfalfahouse.org/assets/downloads/ah_calendar09.pdf). Each calendar features a number of coupons you can redeem for free samples and gifts.

During June, spend \$60 and receive a jar of Kurrajong Native Foods Indigenous Jam*.

Choose from Davidsons plum jam, Rosella jam, Fingerlime maramlade and Lilli Pilli bushtucker conserve.

Might be natural, but...

This month we look at intolerance to *naturally-occurring food chemicals*.

AN OVERVIEW OF SALICYLATES, AMINE AND GLUTAMATE

Most of us accept that food additives such as preservatives, artificial flavours and colours are often responsible for a range of health problems, including skin disorders, stomach complaints, headaches and irritability. What many of us overlook, however, is that *naturally occurring chemicals* in fresh foods can also cause reactions and the symptoms are much the same as with artificial food chemicals.

There are three *naturally occurring chemicals* that play a vital role in the ripening, flavouring, colouring, and preserving of fresh foods. These are salicylates, amines and glutamate. And they're in different concentrations depending on the food and its stage of ripening. As we know, many nutrients are packed into the skin of foods; the same applies to salicylates, amine and glutamate. A common feature of a plant food with high levels of one or more of these chemicals is the flavour and colour of the fruit or vegetable. Tomato is an excellent example; the colour inside and out is intense and it's very rich in flavour. It is also 'very high' in all three chemicals, which is why it's used so frequently as a base ingredient in so much of what we cook. Not all plant

foods contain all three chemicals, but some of the more tasty ones do!

TESTING FOR FOOD CHEMICAL INTOLERANCE

The only sure way, and natural way, to determine a food chemical intolerance is to undertake an elimination diet. This is usually done over a period of four weeks and involves the initial process of maintaining a low-level salicylate diet during the first week then gradually re-introducing foods with high-level chemicals in subsequent weeks. Since each of the three food chemicals are re-introduced in isolation of the other – one week of high-level salicylate, one of high-level amine, and one of glutamate – any potential symptoms manifest almost immediately, thus we can determine which food chemical is responsible for the intolerance. (If amine intolerance is determined then it's not

necessary to test glutamate because all foods that contain glutamate also contain amine.)

The elimination diet also helps you to gradually develop a tolerance to foods that once caused the problem.

MORE INFO ON THE ELIMINATION DIET

- www.cs.nsw.gov.au/rpa/allergy (has good resources and downloads)
- www.fedup.com.au

MANAGING A LOW CHEMICAL DIET

For most people this should be easy. For individuals who are intolerant to glutamate alone, it is very manageable since glutamate is present in relatively few foods. However, for those intolerant to salicylates, you'll need to be more perseverant, and you'll need to use your imagination. The low-salicylate diet ▶8



FOOD ALLERGY OR INTOLERANCE?

INTOLERANCE

DEFINITION: A chemical reaction that occurs after eating or drinking some foods. Reaction to food chemical is accumulative, whereby the body's threshold (tolerance) is exceeded, so the symptoms may not appear until some days after a food is eaten. To remain free of symptoms a carefully planned, low-level chemical diet is required.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BODY? It is not an autoimmune response, but rather a sensitivity to chemicals present in the food, i.e. naturally occurring chemicals and preservatives, and/or artificial chemicals. Nerve endings in different parts of the body become irritated by a gradual build-up effect of the offending food chemical/s. Depending

on the person and the food ingested, symptoms can include one or more of the following: hives and/or other skin problems such as eczema, headaches, tiredness, irritability, and stomach problems. Food intolerance can also be associated with asthma, chronic fatigue syndrome and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS).

ALLERGY

DEFINITION: An auto-immune response to a specific part of a food, usually a complex protein component.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BODY? As if being threatened by a toxic substance, the body's immune system reacts to what is in fact a 'harmless' food substance. The body goes into shock (anaphylaxis), ultimately leading to heart failure. To some people ingestion or even, trace amount cross-contamination from a specific allergen can be fatal if medical treatment isn't sought immediately.

MORE INFO www.allergyfacts.org.au/

is more challenging simply because so many edible plants contain salicylates. Furthermore, foods containing amine almost always contain salicylates. So even if the salicylate-intolerant can tolerate amines, there are few amine plant foods from which to choose. Of the fruits, this leaves only banana and pawpaw, since they each contain only moderate levels of amine. Vegetables are even trickier because there are none that contain only amine. There are, however, a fair number of low/moderate-salicylate fruits and even more low/moderate-salicylate vegetables. While you need to maintain a low-chemical diet day-to-day, you can still include 'problem' foods as long as they're eaten occasionally, with several days break between.

THE LESS OBVIOUS THE SNEAKS

Tin fruits and vegetables are not usually canned with the juice of the actual fruit or vegetable. For example, the juice in tinned pears is often apple juice. To ensure the elimination diet is accurate, it is necessary therefore to use tinned pear in syrup (sugar and water).

RIPE OR UNRIPE?

Natural plant food chemical levels change with ripening.

- Salicylate levels *decrease* with ripening.
- Amine levels *increase* with ripening.

CAROB VS CHOCOLATE?

- Both white and brown chocolate have high levels of amine
- Carob powder contains low-levels of salicylates only.

ENHANCED BY GLUTAMATE

If a food contains glutamate, it also contains amine. Glutamate (or in its 'extracted' form, MSG) is widely used as a cooking aid in Asian restaurants.

CITRIC ACID

Citric acid is a key ingredient in low-chemical cooking. Use it in any recipe that calls for fresh lemon.

IS FOOD INTOLERANCE CURABLE?

Food intolerance is not curable, but it is easily managed. While it's possible for a person with food sensitivities to eventually build up their tolerance, food intolerance may become a problem at various stages throughout life. For example, during times of stress, both physically and emotionally, the body's threshold decreases and food intolerance may return temporarily.

FOOD CHEMICAL GUIDES

Based only on produce currently in-season and/or currently available at Alfalfa House

KEY: S salicylates A amine G glutamate

FRUIT+VEGETABLES

LOW

Cabbage
Celery
Choko
Dried beans
Green Beans
Lentils
Lettuce (iceberg)
Pear
Potato (white)

MODERATE

Apple (red) S
Beetroot S
Carrot S
Kumera S
Lettuce (other) S
Parsnip S
Persimmons S
Potato (other) S
Rhubarb S

HIGH

Apple (green) S
Artichoke S
Broad Beans S
Chilli S
Lemon S, A
Onion S
Pomegranate S
Radish S
Squash S
Watermelon S
Zucchini S

VERY HIGH

Avocado S, A
Broccoli G, S, A
Cauliflower S, A
Corn S
Grapefruit S, A
Kiwifruit S, A
Mandarin S, A
Mushroom G, S, A
Orange S, A
Passionfruit S, A
Spinach G, S, A

HERBS, SPICES AND SAUCES

LOW

Chives
Garlic
Parsley
Poppy seeds
Saffron
Sea Salt
Shallots
Vanilla

MODERATE

Malt Vinegar A

HIGH
All other herbs S
All other spices S

VERY HIGH

Hydrolysed vegetable protein G, A
Meat extracts G, A
Soy paste G, A
Soy sauce G, A
Tamari G, A
Vinegar (cider, red wine, white wine) G, S, A

Gravies G, S, A
Pastes (fish, meat, tomato) G, S, A
Sauces (all) G, S, A
Stock cubes (all) G, S, A
Tomato sauce G, S, A
Yeast extracts G, S, A

MORE THAN JUST FRUIT+VEG

All kinds of foods and beverages contain salicylate, amine or glutamate, including honey, coffee, tea, nuts, beer, wine. For a comprehensive list go to any of the websites mentioned in this article.

RECIPE

The pear is considered to be the 'friendly' food because it has extremely low levels of salicylates; remove the skin and there are almost no traces of salicylates remaining. Not surprisingly, pear features heavily in many low-chemical recipes.

Pear Jam

Makes three standard jars

- 1kg peeled pears*
 - 1kg castor sugar
- (*Without a 'jam-setting mixture', pectin needs to be increased by including about 10% unripened pears. Unripened fruit contain high levels of pectin)

METHOD

1 Mash pears to desired texture. Mix with castor sugar. Pour pear-sugar mix into a large pot and heat gently over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Once completely dissolved, turn up heat. Stir occasionally to prevent jam sticking

to the pot.

2 Jam cooks quickly so check if it's ready to set after 10 mins. Check by spooning a small amount onto a cold plate. Allow to cool for a minute. If thickened with skin on top it is ready, if still very runny once cooled, it needs further cooking
3 Pour into sterilised jars. Seal, label and date. Once opened keep refrigerated; use within four weeks.

NOTE As I have not heard of a sugar-free alternative recipe for making jam, I welcome any feedback or suggestions

SOURCES

Low Salicylate Diet, 2008, Matthew Legge ND www.ewell.com.au
Limes & Lycopen, Kathryn Elliott (nutritionist) www.katherynelliot.com.au
Fed Up, Sue Dengate, 2008
Friendly Food: food for life, Dr Anne R Swaine, Dr Velencia L Soutter and Dr Robert H Loblay, 2006

Tamara Killick draws on five years of experimenting with an array of methods aimed at managing her son's allergies and food intolerances. She welcomes your feedback and comments and encourages you to share your experiences. Email Tamara c/o info@alfalfahouse.org.au.

My Shift **Daisy Knight** aka the Butter Girl

INTERVIEW by TAMARA KILLICK

When did you start volunteering at Alfalfa House and do you volunteer elsewhere in the community?

I started at the co-op about a year ago. I used to volunteer at Rennie's (Daisy's little bro) daycare when he was little. Now he's in kindy.

Why did you choose Alfalfa?

I had to do a study project about a community group for school. So I chose to study and interview Alfalfa House for my project. Although they had pulled out for a bit, my parents used to be members of the co-op so I knew about the place. The project brought us back to the co-op, and as a family we became members again and I started volunteering.

What's an average 'day-in-the-life-of-an-Alfalfa-vollie'?

I was the official butter-cutter for about a year but it doesn't come in bulk any more; it's pre-wrapped now*. I miss that job. People even used to call me Butter Girl. They just call me Daisy these days.

What's your favourite co-op job?

I'd have to stay true to my butter role. I loved going every week to cut up the butter chunks. I like cutting up the chocolate. The chocolate comes in massive blocks and you get to use a chisel and mallet and chop it into wonky chunks. The best were the golden days when I got to do the butter and the chocolate.

How about those 'behind the scene' kinds of jobs at the co-op, the stuff many shoppers don't normally see?

On a slow day I usually cut out little signs and stick them to jars and bins. I wash plastic bags and hang them to dry. I wash buckets, like honey buckets and compost buckets. Every vollie hates washing buckets, everyone is always trying to avoid it! Sometimes things get spilt; there was one day when someone had the miso oozing everywhere. It was a bit gross – I had to clean it up!

Is there such a thing as 'vollie etiquette' or some kind of special 'vollie code'?

Try not to fondle the food with your bare hands! That's good to stick to.



Any funny or weird things happen at the co-op during your shift?

I used to volunteer on the same day as the lady that does the wormfarms – she called me butter girl and I called her worm woman. We liked to make it sound like super-heroes. That was always a bit funny. A strange thing happened the other day while I was waiting across the road from Alfalfa for the traffic lights to change. Suddenly a zombie parade passed by and this one guy was waving his meat cleaver around. He kept saying, "Meat – Need Meat" then he ran into Alfalfa and came back out saying "no meat in there".

You come from a family of co-op members. When did it all begin and does anyone else in the family volunteer at the co-op?

We have a family membership. We've been living a block away all my life and Mum began shopping at the co-op when I was born. Instead of buying lollies we would stop at Alfalfa and Mum would let us choose anything we liked. Dried figs are my favourite. Mum still does it today. I'm pretty sure I'm the only one who has volunteered at Alfalfa though.

You're at Newtown High School of Performing Arts currently completing Year 10 and preparing for the gruelling years of the HSC. How

do you manage the school workload, social life, and volunteering?

Well I don't really. I only volunteer two hours a week. If an essay is due the next day at school, I rush home from Alfalfa and write it up that night. It's all right; Year 10 isn't that heavy.

What do your school friends think of your vollie work?

They love it. They called me butter girl for a while too. I often drag my friends along to help out in the shop.

Have you met anyone cool at the co-op?

Yeah. There's always interesting people to talk to. There was a family that volunteered last year. This year the girl from that family started at my school in the year below me and now she hangs with my friends and me sometimes.

What do you get out of volunteering at the co-op?

I just like the community feel. There are always people at the co-op you wouldn't normally meet.

What day could we find you chopping chocolate into chunks?

I usually do Thursdays after school.

Last words?

Hard core kids volunteer at Alfalfa!

*Bulk butter isn't available at our supplier at the moment; we are only able to procure the pre-wrapped. During the cooler months, the cream of the milk is being used to make fresh cream and cheeses not butter.



THE VITAMINS A TO Z

Vitamin E is a fat-soluble vitamin that also acts as an antioxidant. It aids in the formation of red blood cells and helps the body to utilise vitamin K. It's believed to help to protect the heart by preventing cholesterol being converted to plaque, which thickens blood vessels and can lead to stroke and heart disease. It may also help to prevent cancer, dementia and liver disease. As an antioxidant, it protects the body tissue from the damage of free radicals which could otherwise harm cells, tissues and organs. It is also believed to play a part in protecting against conditions associated with aging and especially as a general immune system booster in older adults.

Because it works so well externally, vitamin E is widely used in skin moisturisers and lip balms. It's used to help heal minor wounds without scarring and to soothe and heal stressed skin tissue. It's been found to help minimise the appearance of wrinkles both when applied topically and as part of your diet. And it's also thought to help with circulation and in preventing blood clots so is especially

good as a moisturiser in daily limb massages for those with diabetes.

The numerous benefits of vitamin E are under constant study. Many have been widely reported and are now in the process of being confirmed by extensive scientific studies.

As vitamin E is heat-sensitive, cooking, processing and storage take their toll. It's best to use the freshest foods possible, store them in airtight containers with little or no light exposure and to avoid overcooking. Or simply eat them raw.

GOOD SOURCES

High levels of vitamin E can be found in such "good fat" foods as avocados, olives and nuts – particularly almonds and hazelnuts and in seeds such as sunflower and pumpkin seeds. Leafy green vegetables are also an excellent source, including spinach. So is Asparagus. Olive, almond, apricot kernel, avocado and

sunflower oils are all very rich in vitamin E and these are worth including in your skin care regimen.

An avocado face mask is a good way to use those very soft ripe avocados – check out the cost price bin for some that are ripe and ready. Avocados are known for their emollient (softening and soothing) and calming effect on the skin. They're ideal for a little self-pampering after a stressful week at work and an avocado mask will both moisture and soften the skin, especially if you have dry or mature skin.

AVOCADO FACE MASK

- 1 Mix half a ripe avocado with a little avocado oil to create a creamy consistency.
- 2 Add a couple of drops of a favourite essential oil for extra relaxation. Make sure the essential oil is appropriate for facial application and remember you only need a tiny amount.
- 3 Cleanse your face and leaving it damp, dab on a thin-ish layer, turn on your favourite relaxation music and lie back and enjoy for 15–20 minutes. Wash off with warm water, pat dry and enjoy feeling your skin's new softness.

– Lucy Marinelli

Max your vitamin D: get outdoors more often!

New thinking suggests that being indoors all the time could in fact **decrease** your vitamin D levels.

There are two primary forms of ultraviolet radiation from the sun: UVA and UVB, each with different wavelengths. And they affect you differently. Because UVA has a longer wavelength, it penetrates materials, such as the earth's atmosphere and window glass, more easily.

These days most of us work indoors and spend less time outdoors. Prior to the Industrial Revolution, windows were very costly and only the wealthy could afford them. So people working indoors



weren't exposed to sunlight filtered through window glass. Window glass will effectively filter out most of the UVB, but minimally filter UVA.

Vitamin D3 is formed when your skin

is exposed to UVB rays, whereas UVA radiation destroys vitamin D. It's one of the protective mechanisms your body uses to avoid overdosing on vitamin D when you're outside. However, when you're exposed to sunlight through windows you get the UVA but almost none of the beneficial UVB.

So it might pay to get out more often, out of the room or car with the sun streaming in, thinking it's doing you some good! The real sun is beyond the glass.

– Stevie Bee

SOURCE Medical Hypotheses 72: 2009; 434–443

PLEASE NOTE that any nutritional advice given in the eNews is of a general nature only and does not take into account individual circumstances or needs. It is not intended as a substitute for professional advice. Alfalfa House encourages readers to seek specific advice from health professionals as needed.

Recipe of the moment

WITH RENATA FIELD

Despite the name, Jerusalem Artichokes have nothing to do with either Jerusalem or artichokes. They're also called Sunroot, as they are a variety of sunflower, and it is the root that is eaten. Jerusalem Artichokes are similar to potatoes, but crunchier with a nutty flavour. They are very low in saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium; a good source of thiamin, phosphorus and potassium; and a very good source of iron.



We currently stock freshly-dug, farmer direct Jerusalem Artichokes from the mid-north coast of NSW.

NOTE: Jerusalems are often mistaken for ginger (see image), so be wary when shopping. Check labels if unsure.

Baked Jerusalem Artichokes

GLUTEN-FREE. VEGAN. SERVES 6

- 800g Jerusalem Artichokes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Wash artichokes and dice, cutting off any nobs. Drizzle in oil in a baking dish and add salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 40 mins. at 200°C or until soft.

Maple Syrup Baked Jerusalem Artichokes

GLUTEN-FREE. VEGAN. SERVES 6

- 800g Jerusalem Artichokes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 75g pinenuts
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Prepare as above, adding the maple syrup, pinenuts and caraway seeds to the dish before baking for 40 mins at 200°C or until soft.

■ All past recipes are on the website. Go to www.alfalfahouse.org/html/recipes.htm

It's party time!

Children's parties can be a nightmare. You drop your child off for a couple of hours of birthday party fun and they come home a horror! All those sweet sugary foods, the salt-laden treats, the artificial flavours and especially the colours – that good old hyper-making red. But what can you do to ensure your child doesn't come home either ill and all wound up or both?

Healthy treats, as you might expect, won't usually be found at kids' parties. I mean, who wants carrot sticks when you can have sausage rolls, cheezels, pink cupcakes and mixed lollies? So, some thought will be needed to come up with the kind of healthy treats kids will actually eat, whether you're hosting the party or sending them along to a friend's party.

Start with the fruit your children most enjoy. The sweeter and more colourful they are, the better. kiwifruit; whatever takes your (and your kids') fancy. Dig out the cookie cutters – flower-like shapes are good, a variety of round sizes, stars, bears, gingerbread boys and girls; the more varied the better.

Get your children involved. Anything they make themselves or help out with, anything they enjoy eating and are proud of, they're more likely to want to eat at a party.

First, cut the fruit into roughly finger thick slices and lay them out on a cutting board. Select the cutters that are the right size for the fruit slices and cut out a series of different shapes and sizes. You should end up with little piles of colourful fruit slices of all different

shapes.

And now to the fun part. Take the flower shaped slices and add a small round berry or little round cut out fruit shape. Pile up different size, round slices to make little fruit cupcakes. You can even decorate them with crushed nuts or a sprinkling of coconut. The bear and gingerbread cut-outs can have eyes, noses, mouths and buttons added, just like the baked ones – and the stars; well the sky's the limit. Use your imagination with what to use for decorations. Ask your kids; they will always be able to come up with something you never would have thought of. Have fun with the presentation. You can add paddle-pop sticks (available from

craft stores) or toothpicks to make the flowers stand up, using half an orange as a base to stick the sticks into. See what other ideas your children have.

If they still go for the unhealthy stuff? Sometimes, no matter what you do, they will always go straight for the stuff you're not so keen on them eating. If they eat a good healthy diet at home, they probably don't see a lot of the foods you get at a kids party. You

can always try feeding them before they go so they're not ravenous at party food time and only eat a small amount of unhealthy food. You won't be able to stop them trying other foods. It's what kids do, they want to do what everyone else is doing. So if they've eaten before the party they may not be too tempted to try too many things or to stuff themselves. After all, Everything in moderation and balance.



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FEED THE eNEWS

This newsletter is your voice and a great way to communicate with other members.

Please feel free to send in your hints, tips, ideas, suggestions and recipes to feedback@alfalfahouse.org

E-News is edited and designed by Stevie Bee for Alfalfa House Community Food Cooperative Ltd

113 Enmore Road Enmore ■ Tel. 9519 3374 ■ feedback@alfalfahouse.org ■ www.alfalfahouse.org