

DAVID
RUSSELL ON ...

The salt of the earth



We all know that it is sensible to limit our consumption of salt, but how much else do we really know about this trace mineral?

The FSA recommends that adults eat no more than 6g of salt per day; or around a teaspoonful. Most of us easily exceed this figure, on average consuming 9g per day. Too much salt in our diet raises blood pressure and strains the kidneys.

But like everything else in life, and in our diets, moderation is key. We do actually need some salt in order to stay fit and healthy. Never was this made more apparent than by the shocking news in July that a woman suffered brain damage from excessively reducing her salt intake and increasing her water intake, while following a detox diet.

Salt provides valuable trace minerals like potassium – needed to regulate blood pressure, and magnesium – needed to relax muscles – as well as sodium. It is also required for cleansing toxic waste from our bodies. Not to mention of course, greatly enhancing the flavour of our meals.

So, while it is wise to limit your salt intake by watching your consumption of highly salted processed foods like crisps, salted nuts, canned soups and sauces, cheese, cured meats and even some sandwiches, there is no need to avoid it altogether, or to inflict bland, salt-free meals on your family or customers.

As for which salt to choose when cooking, we recommend you use sea salt or rock salt. These both avoid the chemical processing that table salt and 'low salt' undergo and are naturally rich in the beneficial minerals like potassium and magnesium. They also have a far superior better, stronger, flavour, meaning that you need to use less of them. In fact, many 'low salt' brands claim to contain half the sodium of standard salt, however as they also, in my experience, have half the flavour, you are no better off!

The lesson here is to stick to honest, old-fashioned ingredients, which usually end up tasting better and being better for you than the new-fangled products aimed at health-conscious customers. So, in short, limit the high-salt, processed foods and when seasoning dishes, choose salt that you can grind, not sprinkle!

NEW PRODUCTS

THE PICK OF THIS MONTH'S NEW PRODUCTS

MINTOMILE TEA

Sympathy Teas has won a Gold Great Taste Award for their Mintomile tea – a blend of mints, chamomile and lemon balm.

www.sympathyteas.co.uk

SHARP'S HONEY SPICE

A new bottle-conditioned beer from Sharp's Brewery has been selected as a finalist in the first-ever Sainsbury's beer competition.

www.sharpsbrewery.co.uk

GLENNANS VEGETABLE CRISPS

Vegetable crisps are all the rage and Glennans is the biggest producer in the country. They have recently added sweet potato to the mix and we are big fans of the flavour.

www.glennans.co.uk

SOLO CUP

Solo Cup Europe is the first food packaging manufacturer to work with Closed Loop facility to supply PET disposables to the foodservice sector. www.closedlooprecycling.co.uk

PEROS PRIZEWINNER TRAVELS TO AFRICA

The winner of the prize draw run by Peros at Hotelympia 2008 has received her prize – a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Africa. The lucky winner, Francine Kitchin, of National Express East Coast – travelled courtesy of Peros and One Water, the not-for-profit bottled-water brand distributed by Peros, to see first-hand the work being carried out by the One Foundation



Water pumps in Africa.

to help bring fresh water to communities across Africa.

Accompanied by James Roberts, managing director of Peros, Francine travelled with daughter Gemma to two villages in the northwest province of South Africa. There they saw two of the 16 PlayPumps that have been financed by One Water sales, and experienced some of the difficulties faced by communities which do not have a PlayPump. Francine told *UC*, "We could see the PlayPumps make a huge difference to these communities."