

DAVID
RUSSELL ON...



Spring clean your menus

If the thought that spring is just around the corner sets you off sneezing, you may be interested to learn that certain foods can help you fight hay fever. The classic symptoms of a runny nose, itchy eyes and uncontrollable sneezing make spring time an annual misery for millions of us. Most people will simply reach for the antihistamines and stock up on tissues, but try looking in your larder as well as your medicine cabinet as there are certain foods which can help.

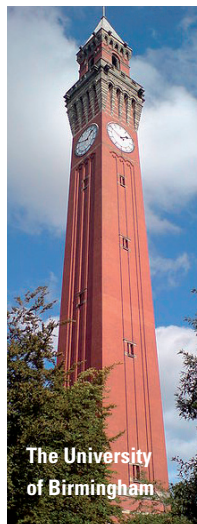
Anti-inflammatory foods – these do exactly what they say on the tin: help the body in its fight to control excessive inflammation. Allergic reactions like hay fever produce an inflammatory response, so upping your intake of anti-inflammatory foods is a great way to help fight the symptoms naturally. Good food choices include oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, trout and sardines (and to a lesser extent fresh tuna), plus ginger, berries, onions and garlic.

Locally produced honey – another essential ingredient as it will contain the same specific strains of pollen that you are reacting to, and consuming it appears to help desensitise your body so you don't react to environmental exposure.

Apples, onions and tea – all of these are rich in quercetin, a naturally occurring plant pigment which contains substances called flavonoids. These are thought to help stop the immune system from releasing histamine, to reduce allergy symptoms.

Fruit and vegetables – you may struggle to reach your five-a-day target, but it is more important than ever that you up your intake of these allergy fighting foods. Fresh fruit and veg are a great source of vitamin C, perhaps the most important anti-allergy nutrient. It supports your natural immune defences and helps to calm a reaction.

So put these foods on the menu to help you, your family and your customers enjoy rather than dread the warmer weather around the corner. You could try a spring clean smoothie of berries, banana, live natural yoghurt and local honey – it's bound to be a hit with sniffing students.



The University
of Birmingham

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GROUP UPDATE

The application form for the TUCO learning and Development Group's Pilot Programme of the 3Cs, which takes place on April 24th at the University of Birmingham, is now on our website. We are looking for 60 to attend and spaces are still available. The International Cookery Courses have gone well and the final session in May is now sold out.

We are putting together another three sessions for late 2009 and 2010 and the details will appear in due course on the website and in this magazine. Those that have completed all three sessions this time around will be invited to the TUCO Conference Dinner in Birmingham, where they will receive their certificate.

We hope to have details of our partnership with the Institute of Hospitality and the course module that we will offer in the next few weeks. We will have our new banner at the Chef's Competition in Blackpool and I hope that you can attend and support this. A long-term programme with budgets is being drafted and will go forward for approval.

We are also developing our partnership with Moon Developments, and the updated database has gone onto the website, providing a lot of info on learning and development and including exchanges, which will involve working at another university for a week.

AWP HANDS OUT THE P45s



"It makes me cry. It is just appalling. I am furious, to be honest, that the banks didn't support

me." Antony Worrall Thompson after shutting four of his seven restaurants, leaving 60 unemployed.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7877289.stm>