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malabarsuperspice.com

## Upcoming Events

### IOWA State University Meat Laboratory Courses

#### Cured Meat

January 13–15, 2015

#### Dry & Semi Dry Sausage

April 14–16, 2015

Iowa State University

[www.ans.iastate.edu/meatcourses](http://www.ans.iastate.edu/meatcourses)

### Banff Pork Seminar

January 20–22, 2015

Banff, Alberta

[www.banffpork.ca](http://www.banffpork.ca)

### 11<sup>th</sup> Annual North American Summit on Food Safety

March 4–5, 2015

Toronto, ON

[www.foodsafetycanada.com](http://www.foodsafetycanada.com)

## In The News

### Malabar is BRC Certified!

We are pleased to announce that Malabar has earned the coveted BRC Certification with an 'A' rating!



For more information, see our website, [www.malabarsuperspice.com](http://www.malabarsuperspice.com).

# THE MEAT OF IT:

## REAL SCIENCE VS. FOOD MARKETING

*Science has been at the heart of advances in food safety, quality and taste. Consumers can expect food to taste better, and be better for them than at any time in the past. But scientific rigour is sometimes lacking when it comes to food trends, and food marketing can exacerbate the problem.*

*Consumers rightly are looking for good food, that's good for them. Processors are continuously developing food products to meet consumers changing tastes, but are constrained by functional requirements for texture, colour and shelf-life.*

*Meanwhile new research continues to debunk the results of 20–30 years ago, changing the landscape around which foods and ingredients are good for you, and which are not. Here we explore some recent trends in food with these issues in mind.*

### Clean Labels

Right now nothing is as hot as the quest for a cleaner label. Food after food is shedding what consumers see as 'unpronounceable' ingredients. Mintel Group reports that consumer trust of food companies is at an all-time low, and that label-reading is at an all-time high. What's the simple principal people use? If you can't pronounce it, don't buy it.

This can be problematic when ingredients are labelled with their scientific names, or when

ingredients that are necessary for safety and functionality cause undue consumer alarm. Sodium nitrite is a prime example – beneficial, functional, legally required and good for you and yet it can still frighten consumers. (See our From the Lab feature on Nitrites in this issue for more!) Food for thought: What would consumers think if simple salt was labelled as sodium chloride? (See more on this in our BLOG at [www.malabarsuperspice.com](http://www.malabarsuperspice.com) later in January.)

*continued on page 3*

# FROM THE LAB

## A FRESH, SCIENTIFIC LOOK AT NITRATES & NITRITES

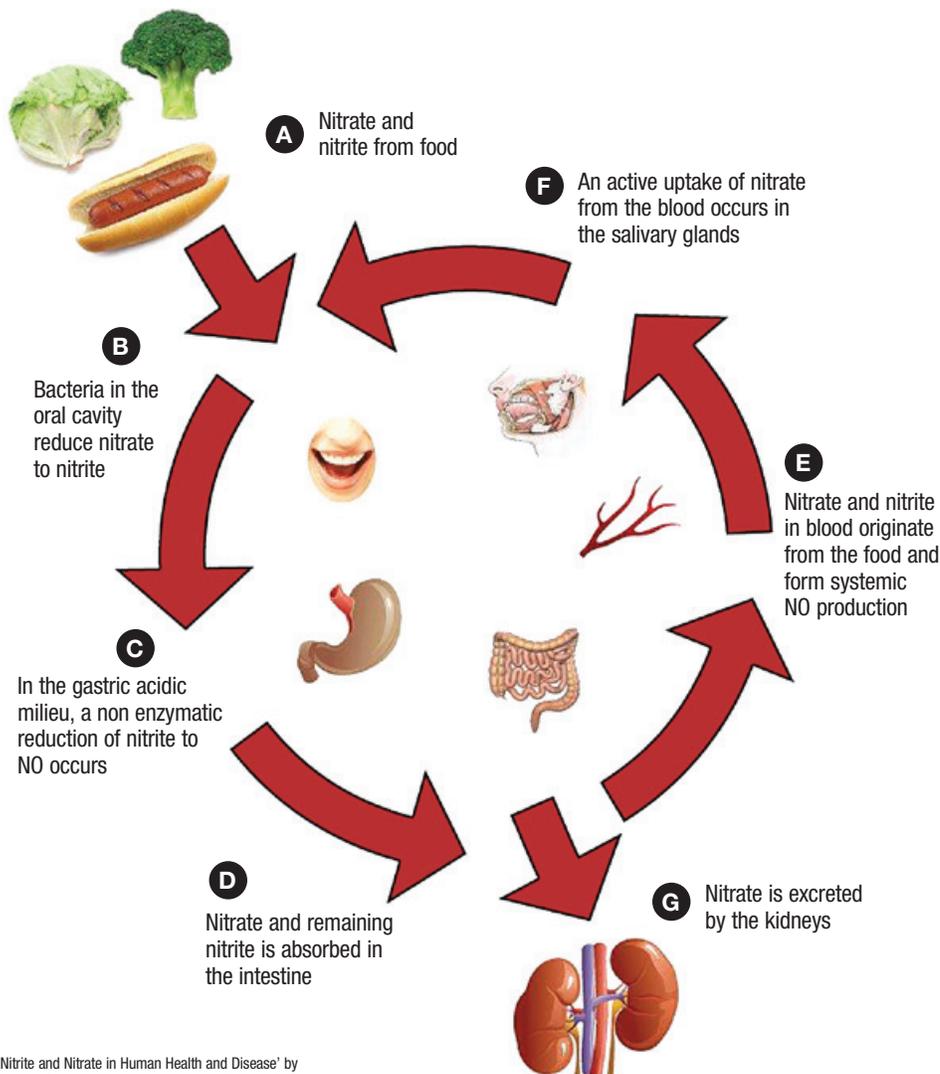
The meat industry has always known nitrites were safe, but to consumers, nitrites continue to be a cause for concern. Many consumer reports purported to show a link between nitrite consumption and cancer, and this belief persists among many foodies. Yet nitrites are key functional components in cured meats, responsible for their characteristic pink colour, and for retarding the growth of harmful bacteria. Many vegetables and grains contain high levels of nitrate that is converted to nitrite by our digestive process. So, when we eat fruits, vegetables or grains, our bodies produce nitrite.

Research has shown that nitrates are a healthy part of a balanced diet, and there is nothing to fear from consuming them. So what happened? Science happened.

*"Where you receive it (nitrite) actually makes no difference, because nitrite is nitrite. In other words, nitrite derived from celery or other vegetables is exactly the same as the nitrate from cured meats."*

Jeff Sindelar, University of Wisconsin

## WHAT HAPPENS TO NITRATE & NITRITE IN THE BODY?



Neither nitrate nor nitrite accumulates in the body. Nitrate converts to nitrite in contact with saliva. Here's how the nitrate we eat breaks down:

- 25% is converted into salivary nitrite,
- 20% converted into nitrite,
- and the rest is excreted in the urine within 5 hours of ingestion.

Any nitrate that is absorbed has a very short half-life, disappearing from our blood in under five minutes. When nitrite in the stomach reacts with gastric contents, it forms nitric oxide which is now known to have a key role in heart health & other chemical reactions in the body.

The body actually makes nitrite as part of its normal, healthy nitrogen cycle.

### Research has shown that nitrite:

- Regulates blood pressure
- Prevents injury from heart attack
- Prevents brain damage following a stroke
- Prevents preeclampsia in pregnant women
- Promotes wound healing
- Promotes successful organ transplantation
- Treats sickle cell anemia
- Prevents stomach ulcers

Nitrite and Nitrate in Human Health and Disease' by Nathan S. Bryan and Joseph Loscalzo, Editors. Published in 2011 by Humana Press, found on [www.knowyournitrites.com](http://www.knowyournitrites.com)

For more information, check out [www.knowyournitrites.com](http://www.knowyournitrites.com) AND Chris Kresser's blog post on 'The Nitrate & Nitrite Myth: Another Reason Not to Fear Bacon' [www.chriskresser.com](http://www.chriskresser.com)



## Sodium Levels

Sodium levels in processed foods have been the target of government interest in recent years, and many processors are actively working to reduce sodium levels in their products. Consumers seemed to catch on for a while too. However, The NPD Group, a leading global information company, found in a survey in June of this year that at least in the US, consumers are less concerned about their sodium intake than they were, and their consumption of foods with low sodium or no salt label will continue to decline in the future.

There's rigorous debate among researchers about whether current levels of salt intake are actually harmful and in fact, very low salt diets appear to be dangerous too. Figures indicate that sodium intake has remained relatively stable since the 1960's, while hypertension has increased greatly over the same period. The most recent research shows that it's the **BALANCE** between potassium & sodium in the diet that's key. Adding potassium to the diet – spinach, bananas, avocados, or even salt replacers that contain potassium - may be more helpful, and healthful, than reducing sodium intake alone.

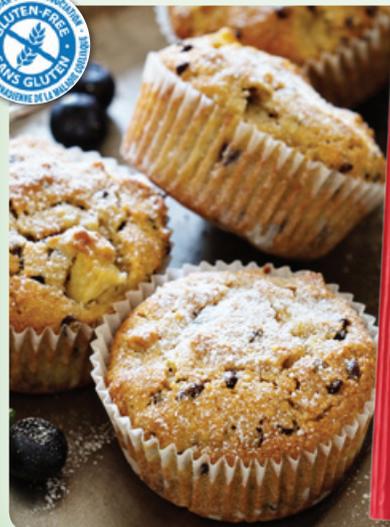


## Gluten-Free

Who hasn't heard of 'gluten-free'? Books like *Wheat Belly*, *Grain Brain* and *The Paleo Diet* are all feeding the trend that has become the largest agent of change in grocery aisles this year. Even foods that are naturally gluten-free are benefiting from simply saying so on the packaging.

However, the science behind the purported health affects from gluten is less than solid, and nutritionally, avoiding gluten means avoiding most whole grains, which have been important to the human diet for centuries as a source of vitamins and minerals, such as B vitamins and iron, as well as fiber. Studies show that whole grain foods, as part of a healthy diet, contribute to lowered risk of heart disease, type-2 diabetes, and some forms of cancer. While Celiac disease affects less than 1% of the population, gluten-free foods remain the de-rigour foods of 2014.

CBC's MarketPlace found that many gluten-free foods have higher cost (up to 3X more) and lower nutritional value. (Gluten products are often higher in sodium & higher in sugars.)



Researchers asked the question "Why do you buy gluten-free foods?"

Here's what they found:

- 35% 'generally healthier'
- 27% 'to manage my weight'
- 21% 'generally low-carb'
- 15% 'gluten or wheat intolerance'
- 7% 'celiac disease'

- From a 2013 Mintel Survey of US Consumers



## Meat, Saturated Fat & Heart Disease



For many years meat & saturated fat were vilified as causes of heart disease. Recent research indicates that meat and saturated fats may not be causing heart disease at all – it may in fact have more to do with sugar and carbohydrate intake. We'll be covering this in our next blog post, so keep an eye out for it on [www.malabarspices.com](http://www.malabarspices.com)

*"In today's era of lightning-fast, global-reaching communications, mob rule quickly overrides facts... processors have developed a propensity for knee-jerk reactions based on panicky 'consumer insights'."*

- David Feder, Executive Editor - Technical, at PreparedFoods.com

## Jimmy Kimmel on Food

Check out two of our favourite videos on Jimmy Kimmel's YouTube Channel: "What's a GMO?" & "Jimmy Kimmel asks Gluten-Free Dieters What Gluten Is"

# INDULGENCE of the Season



Try something unique this holiday! These special seasonings are available for a limited time only. (Check out our website for more holiday ideas.)

## Black Garlic Powder

Produced by the fermentation of garlic during which the sugars & amino acids contained in the garlic produce melanoidin, which gives it the dark colour. The better the quality of the raw garlic, the more sweet & savoury the flavour notes. Adds a very unique flavour to seasonings. For a limited time, we have a small amount available. Ask for details.

## Truffle Parmesan & Black Garlic Seasoning

A very special blend of aged parmesan, aromatic truffles & black garlic for a very unique holiday seasoning. A decadent holiday treat. For a limited time, we have a small amount available. Ask for details.

For more information contact us at **1-888-456-6252**,  
or email [csr@malabarspice.com](mailto:csr@malabarspice.com).

## Holiday Hours

We're closing briefly over the holidays to allow our employees to enjoy time with their families

**December 19th – 12:30pm CLOSED**

**December 24th – 12noon CLOSED**

**December 25th & 26th – CLOSED**

**December 31st – 12noon CLOSED**

**January 1st – CLOSED**

Wishing you a Merry Christmas  
and a Happy Holiday.



## OUR PRESIDENT'S Message

*In many restaurants and hotels, "Front of House" refers to the part of the business where employees interact directly with customers. There is often intensive training around taking care of the customer, knowing products & dishes on offer, and providing exceptional service.*

*For supermarkets and larger stores today, so much effort and money is going into creating a "unique shopping experience" – the sourcing of products, and dressing up the store, but what about the customer experience – the "Front of Store"? Many grocery store employees have never tasted or cooked with the products that they are selling, and have been given very limited training about them and how to best introduce them to customers.*

*We know that presentation matters, but so does a good narrative, and deli counters in particular can increase sales, long term loyalty and profits by engaging the customer with informed conversation about the products in front of them – a truth well understood by smaller specialty stores & delis whose success is based on doing this right.*

*With the holiday season and consumers prepared to spend money on good food, it's time to make sure 'Front of House' is as prepared as possible.*

*All the best this Christmas, from Malabar.*



**Doris Valade**  
President  
Malabar Super Spice Co.



Look for our next edition in Jan/Feb 2015.

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For more information on any of the subjects covered in Malabar's newsletter, or to suggest topics you'd like to see covered in future editions, please contact Sara Alexander at [marketing@malabarspice.com](mailto:marketing@malabarspice.com).

Malabar takes your privacy very seriously, and we do everything in our power to safeguard it. We NEVER rent, sell, lend or otherwise circulate our mailing lists or other contact information to anyone outside of Malabar.



Malabar is certified to provide Halal products, and is proud to be BRC accredited.



Malabar Super Spice is a proud supporter of Jeremy Hughes and Team Hughes Racing.  
[www.10hughesracing.com](http://www.10hughesracing.com)