

Fabulous Food



Mushrooms Are Ready For Their Closeup

(NAPSA)—In the ensemble cast of the produce aisle, finding a stand-out player can sometimes be difficult. After all, each has its own unique characteristics, whether it be taste, nutrition, or health benefits. However, when it comes to mushrooms—which are grown in the dark in nondescript growing houses across the country—it might seem they're averse to attention.

Yet mushrooms are increasingly taking a starring role on consumers' plates. Often called the superfood in the produce section, mushrooms take a supporting role in a recipe or shine as the lead of a dish. These formidable fungi are a source of powerful nutrients, low in calories and sodium, and they're fat-, cholesterol- and gluten-free.

Mushrooms As Health Helpers

When it comes to the subject of health, researchers are increasingly turning their spotlight on mushrooms.

Mushrooms are so talented, researchers are looking to them in the fight against cancer. A powder made from white button mushrooms was found to reduce the levels of prostate specific antigen, or PSA, in prostate cancer patients whose PSA levels had been rising. Studies are also underway to determine if properties within mushrooms might offer a dietary, non-drug intervention to help prevent recurrence of hormone-dependent breast cancers.

Ongoing research at Penn State University shows mushrooms have the highest known single source of the antioxidants ergothioneine and glutathione compared to other non-mushroom food. Both those antioxidants are associated with anti-aging, and when they're present together, they work extra hard to protect the body from the physiological stress that causes visible signs of aging and they may also help prevent Parkinson's and



The mighty mushroom, in all its varieties, can be a tasty way to protect your health.

Alzheimer's. Plus, studies show it takes only a few mushrooms to increase ergothioneine and glutathione levels—about five button mushrooms a day.

Additionally, researchers at the National University of Singapore found similar results and discovered that less than one cup of cooked mushrooms twice a week could reduce the odds of mild cognitive decline.

With so many varieties, tastes, and textures, it's easy to incorporate mushrooms into a diet. The next time you're in the produce section of your grocery store, pick up your favorite variety of mushrooms. In soup, on a pizza, stuffed, sautéed or sliced, chances are these mighty mushrooms will get a round of applause from family and friends.

Learn More

For further information, from the experts at the American Mushroom Institute, visit www.americanmushroom.org.