



foodsense

MONTHLY NEWS & VIEWS

july 09 issue

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS

TVF is continuing to make good progress environmentally through the recycling of food waste, paper, cardboard and tin and has reached the stage whereby 50% of its total waste is being recycled. A "right first time" policy is helping to prevent waste occurring which to date has seen overall levels reduce by 5%.

Work continues towards gaining accreditation to Green Dragon Level 5 status which equates to ISO 1401 and we are hopeful this will be achieved by October 2009.



BRC UPDATE



At TVF, we have been working hard on improving our food safety systems and now have a Quality Management System which exceeds the requirements of ISO9001:2000 and we believe will meet the requirements of British Retail Consortium Global Food Safety Standard version 5.

This is a positive step for Tillery Valley and demonstrates our commitment to achieving the best standards available. Once our audit has been carried out in late August (pending confirmation from the audit body), we should be able to confirm our status regarding BRC accreditation.

Chris Woodbridge, Technical Director

British Frozen Food Awards

TVF recently entered a number of its Vive Health dishes in the British Frozen Foods awards – catering section. Although failing to achieve a top three place, the entries attracted some very favourable comments from the judging panel; "well flavoured", "very clever concept", "very innovative product", "application and complete package good".

If you are interested in learning more about our Vive Health product range please contact your Catering Consultant or contact Michelle Brown our Customer Services Manager on 01495 211555.



Home Freezing Advice

Following several queries to site from our chilled customers regarding the suitability of our products for freezing locally, I have agreed to issue the advice below.

At Tillery Valley, we have controlled chilling and freezing processes which are designed to cool product from high oven temperatures to blast chill / freeze in less than 2 hours. We have invested in this equipment for many reasons amongst which are food safety and quality control purposes.

I strongly recommend that our chilled products are not frozen for consumption at a later date as this exposes the consumer to various food safety hazards and the risk of poor product quality when it is defrosted and heated.

My reasons for this advice are:

Food Safety Hazards:

Our chilled products are designed to be safe to eat up to 4 days after production providing they have been heated (if required)

and served in the proper manner. If this product is then frozen part way through its chilled life, the potential for a food safety issue to develop during the freezing - and most critically during the thawing process - is very high. The cooking of the product post freezing will not necessarily render the product safe to eat as some toxins formed during microbial growth are heat stable.

Product Quality Issues:

If a product is slow frozen (as in most local site freezing situations), the ice crystals that form have time to become large enough to break down the structure of the food. This for instance will result in vegetables going mushy when defrosted.

Please contact myself or any member of the Tillery Valley Team if you need any further information on this advice.

Chris Woodbridge,
Technical Director

Let the *Sunshine* in!

Is there more to Vitamin D than just a good skeleton? Disease patterns across the world are being increasingly linked to Vitamin D status. Good quality experimental research and population studies provide a wealth of emerging information about vitamin D. Much is based on observations of diseases and disease patterns in people as they live further north from the equator, either because of geography or through immigration.

Multiple Sclerosis

Although the risk of developing multiple sclerosis (MS) is due to a complex mixture of factors such as heredity and environment, a striking feature of MS is that it becomes more prevalent the further north you go. It is almost unheard of around the equator. Scotland has the highest rate in the world, closely followed by Northern Ireland. Growing evidence suggests that this may be due to an association with the sun, in that humans synthesise less vitamin D in more northerly latitudes. Key research on MS has taken place in Canada.

Public health programmes can have a phenomenal impact – but even then a northerly country like Finland, which has a significant food fortification programme, still cannot achieve the sort of blood levels of vitamin D in the population that they would like to see for optimal vitamin D status.

Some Other Conditions

The geographical distributions of Inflammatory Bowel Diseases (IBD) such as Crohn's and colitis - are similar to MS. It is thought that Vitamin D has an effect on cell behaviours. In IBD vitamin D appears to have some form of regulatory function by 'policing' mucosal cells in the gut lining to behave appropriately towards the large numbers of bacteria that are essential for healthy gut function.

The risk and severity of TB, and the incidence of breast and prostate cancers, becomes greater as people live or migrate northwards. In the light of its emerging links with some diseases, new credence can be given to old-fashioned remedies for treating TB - such as exposure to fresh air and dosing with cod liver oil!

Heart health

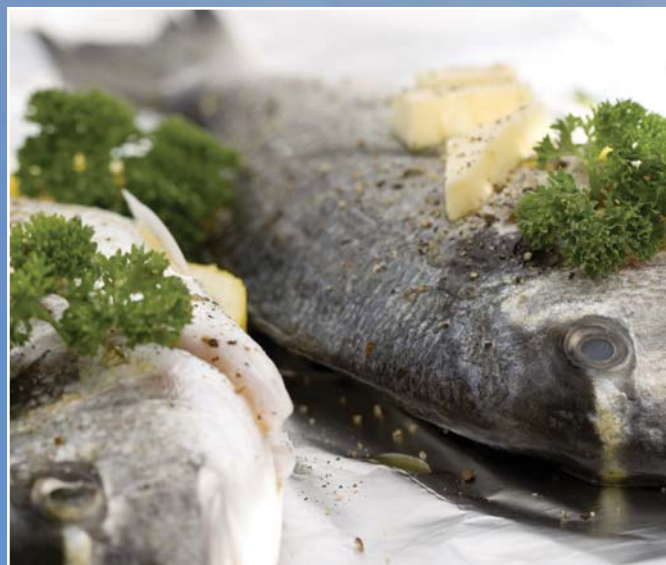
It is well known that more northerly populations have higher levels of heart disease, for example, the UK has the highest levels in Western Europe, and Scotland the highest in the UK. There are seasonal fluctuations in levels of blood lipids (fats) which can be related to summer, which is linked to sunshine and hence to vitamin D. It looks as though in southern climes, elderly people have overall more stable but lower blood levels of vitamin D all year round, and they 'coast' through just making it as needed. Remember that oily fish is a good source of vitamin D and an essential component of the 'heart-healthy' Mediterranean Diet. Lighter skinned more northerly dwellers, on the other hand, stock up higher levels during summer, and those who can afford it benefit from a burst of winter holiday sunshine.

In addition, vitamin D may have an 'anti-aging' role and prevent the loss of elasticity in blood vessels as we get older (arteriosclerosis), and which is a factor in the development of blood clots and heart disease.

Imagine, then, the additional power of exercise in terms of heart health, when taken in the sunshine!

Food for the brain?

Data collected from National Diet and Nutrition Surveys show that older people, especially those living in residences, have lower levels of vitamin D. As well as the increased risk of fractures, some other complications of ageing – such as hardening of the arteries mentioned above - may be related to these lower vitamin D blood levels prevalent in older people. In terms of cognitive function (the capacity of 'doing things', not of memory), a decline in functional abilities is accepted as part of ageing. Some people don't decline at all, others swiftly sink into dementia, whilst others just drift slowly downwards. Some complex research models suggest that vitamin D is relevant in this mental decline, as higher levels of vitamin D status seem to modify its course.



In practical terms vitamin D could have several roles in this downward spiral – if poor cognition affects mobility, then someone may be less likely to go outside into the sunshine. It may also affect their appetite and ability to shop and prepare meals, so they get less vitamin D from the few dietary sources there are.

This suggests then, that it is really important that those caring for the food, mobility and social needs of older people get those vitamin D-rich finger-food summer picnics underway!

Anne Donelan,
Dietetic Services Manager

Email addresses change frequently -
If you change your email address please be sure to advise our
Customer Services Manager Michelle Brown:
michelle.brown@tvf-online.co.uk

Tillery Valley Foods Limited, Cwmtillery Industrial Estate, Abertillery, Gwent NP13 1LZ
Telephone: 01495 211555 Fax: 01495 213839 www.tvf-online.co.uk

