

Garlic, Soy

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That banner is hoisted by the bean's isoflavones, which are plant estrogens and responsible for healthy lipid metabolism and cardiovascular health. Isoflavones are removed by genetic engineering, according to Stephen Lewis, owner of Doctor's Nutrition in Longview.

"It's almost impossible to get non-genetically modified soy," Lewis said. "Soy food products and soy isoflavone supplements should come from non-genetically modified sources and can add significantly to a healthy diet."

Soybean products on grocery shelves include tofu, a fermented custard-like substance that acts as the binding agent in stir-fried dishes. Other fermented soybean products include miso, a brownish paste that becomes a slightly salty soup, and tempeh, which has more texture and serves as a meat substitute.

Heard steers her clients away from most soy products on the shelf.

"If a person would like to take advantage of the benefits of soy, I recommend that they stick to the traditional soy products like miso and tempeh which are the healthier whole food choices that are not highly processed," Heard said. "Traditional soy products are fermented, making them much easier to digest. And they also contain health supportive microorganisms ... which aid in digestion."

Soy's hormonal benefits, courtesy of its isoflavones, include easing hot flashes during menopause and boosting breast cell function, Lewis said. "Tofu is the Japanese word for soybean curd," Lewis said. "The fermentation process makes it very healthy and easily digested and easily absorbed. This is a source of B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorus, potassium and sodium. According to Chinese medicine, tofu has a cooling nature and benefits the lungs and large intestine."

Corn Smut

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forces the metabolic process inside the cob to change, creating new, healthier nutrients.

Take lysine, one of those "essential amino acids" that the body requires but can't manufacture. We need it to fight infections and strengthen bones. Bodybuilders pound lysine when they want to build muscle, and estheticians recommend it to keep skin looking young.

Corn has virtually no lysine; huitlacoche is loaded with it. It also is packed with more beta-glucens — the soluble fiber that gives oatmeal its well-known cholesterol-cutting power — than, well, oatmeal.

Sando began his hunt in Xochimilco, a community on Mexico City's south side, where huitlacoche-munching Aztecs first built floating fields atop rafts of wood and soil. His intrepid leader was cultural culinary tour guide Ruth Alegria, a bilingual chef who coordinates the International Association of Culinary Professionals in Mexico.

The product also relieves stomach inflammation and neutralizes toxins in the gastrointestinal tract, he said.

Lewis likes garlic, too. The pungent vegetable contains allicin, an oily sulphur compound credited for accomplishing what Lewis' grandmother called, "spring cleaning."

"The allicin is the ingredient that causes garlic to be a worm killer," Lewis said. "It has also been shown to be more effective against candida (yeast) than eight leading antifungus. Maybe my grandmother was right."

For people who just can't get enthusiastic about garlic or soy, April also happens to be blueberry pie month.

Guacamole dip

3 avocados (medium size and ripe)
1 teaspoon garlic finely chopped
1 tablespoon fresh Cilantro finely chopped
1 tablespoon green onion finely chopped
1 teaspoon sea salt
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon olive oil
Vegetable crudité (carrots, celery, red bell pepper, cucumber, broccoli, cauliflower — for dipping)

Cut the three avocados in half and remove the seeds. Scoop the avocado from the outer peeling with a spoon and place into a mixing bowl. Using a potato masher, mash the avocados until they are smooth.

Add the remaining ingredients to the avocado in the bowl and stir together well. Taste the guacamole and add more seasonings if needed.

Serve with vegetable crudité (carrots, celery, cucumber and red bell pepper cut into sticks and broccoli, and cauliflower florets) or corn tortilla chips. Guacamole is also great served on baked potatoes, salads, tacos, in lettuce wraps and stuffed inside tomatoes.

(Store guacamole inside an air tight container with lid inside the refrigerator. Completely cover the top of the guacamole with a sheet of plastic wrap to prevent the air from turning the avocado

black.)

Makes: 2 cups. Source: Danielle Heard, www.artemisinthecity.com.

Bok Choy, Shiitake and Snow Pea Stir Fry

Brown rice
1 cup short grain brown rice
1 pinch sea salt
2 1/4 cups water
Stir fry:
3 tablespoons sesame oil
1 cup yellow onion small, diced (about 1 small onion)
1 pound bok choy washed and cut into 1/2-inch pieces (3 cups white stem, 2 cups leaves)
3 small carrots cut into matchsticks (about 1 cup)
1 large red bell pepper (washed, seeded and thinly sliced)
3 ounces shiitake mushrooms sliced thin (1 3/4 cup sliced)
1 tablespoons garlic finely chopped (4-5 cloves)
1 tablespoons ginger root peeled and finely chopped
6 ounces fresh snow peas, washed
1 tablespoon toasted sesame oil
Sauce:
1/2 cup water (warm)
1 tablespoon kuzu root or arrowroot
1/4 cup tamari

In a 2-quart sauce pot, add the brown rice, sea salt and water. Bring to a boil, then cover the pot and reduce the heat to low. Cook the rice covered for 35 minutes. Then remove the pot from the heat and let rice sit an additional 10 minutes in the covered pot. The rice will be soft when done. There also will be holes in the cooked rice and no water remaining in the pot. Once done, pour the rice into a bowl and set aside.

While the brown rice is cooking, prepare the stir fry ingredients. Finely chop the garlic cloves and ginger root. Wipe the tops of the shiitake mushrooms off with a damp paper towel. Remove the stems and slice the mushrooms thin. Rinse the bok choy and remove the hard bottom of the stem. Chop the bok choy into 1/2 inch bite size pieces separating the white stem pieces and the dark green bok choy leaves. Wash the red bell pepper and re-

move the seeds and stem. Cut the pepper into 2-3 inch thin pieces. Peel the outer skin off the yellow onion and cut into a small dice. Wash and peel the carrots. Then cut the carrots into thin diagonal slices and further slice the diagonal pieces into thin matchsticks. Wash the snow peas. Once completed, set each of the vegetables aside on a plate or in bowls.

Next prepare the thickening sauce. In a small glass or bowl, dissolve the kuzu root or arrowroot into the warm water. Once completely dissolved, stir in the tamari and set aside for the stir fry.

In a large 4-quart wok or 12-inch skillet, add the sesame oil and heat on medium heat until warm. Add the diced yellow onion and cook for a minute while stirring. Then add the thick white bok choy stems, the carrots and red

bell pepper. Stir vegetables continuously and cook for a few minutes. Next add the shiitake mushrooms, garlic and ginger and continue to cook while stirring quickly. Add the snow peas, bok choy leaves and the sauce. Continue stirring vegetables to cook. The sauce will begin to thicken. Drizzle the toasted sesame oil over the vegetables, and if you have a lid for your pan, cover the stir fry vegetables for a minute to

help cook the snow peas and bok choy leaves. This should all be done very quickly. The vegetables should remain slightly firm and vibrant with color. Be careful not to overcook the vegetables or burn the garlic.

Serve the vegetable stir fry hot over the warm short grain brown rice. Add extra tamari sauce if necessary.

Serves: 6. Source: Danielle Heard, www.artemisinthecity.com.

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