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Friday, December 14, 2001

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Updated Every 30 Minutes

Ohio State becomes home of soy bread

Healthy staple recipe developed

The Associated Press

COLUMBUS — Ohio State University hopes to market a bread that would make soy more attractive to Americans.

Americans are reluctant to embrace a soy-rich diet, though sales of soy products increased after a 1999 Federal Drug Administration claim that soy might reduce the risk of heart disease, said Bob Callanan, spokesman for the St. Louis-based American Soybean Association.

Ohio State hopes that bread will be more easily accepted than traditional soy foods like tofu or soy milk. The school is negotiating to license a soy bread recipe to bakeries that would put the bread on grocery shelves.

People have to eat at least 25 grams of soy protein daily to reap its health benefits, according to the FDA. Mr. Callanan said a serving needs to provide 6.25 grams of soy protein and be low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol to be considered heart-healthy.

Yael Vodovotz is an assistant professor in the school's Food Science and Technology Department and one of two people who developed Ohio State's bread recipe. She said the bread meets the FDA's heart-healthy requirements.

Mr. Callanan said products such as cereal and Slim Fast have started incorporating soy into their ingredients since the FDA released its claim. But he said he doesn't know of any American bread products that use soy, though soy flour is being incorporated into bread in several countries outside the United States. Ms. Vodovotz started researching soy bread



Dr. Yael Vodovotz helped to develop the recipe for this soy bread at Ohio State University.

(Associated Press photo)

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Survey



while working at the NASA Johnson Space Center in Houston, where she was trying to develop a plan to sustain human life on another planet.

To develop the recipe, Ms. Vodovotz partnered with Cory Ballard, an undergraduate and the senior food technologist for Chef-Con, a research, consulting and food-manufacturing company.

The two started talking after Mr. Ballard attended a lecture Ms. Vodovotz gave on the properties that make bread stale.

“We kind of joked because she was baking bread in bread machines, and I like to bake bread a more traditional way,” he said.

Mr. Ballard's baking skills were key to the bread's taste.

“It's been a very difficult process to be able to incorporate enough soy into your product,” she said.

A comparison at The Hills Market near Worthington, Ohio showed that 70 percent of taste-testers liked the soy bread better than wheat, Mr. Ballard said.

Mr. Ballard doesn't know when the bread could hit grocery stores. But he knows that day will come. He also would like to see soy bread in school lunches and sub shops.

University researchers are interested in testing the bread's cancer-control potential, said Steven Schwartz, a professor and the Carl E. Haas endowed chair in the food industries.

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