

A new alternative to sodium—Fish sauce

18 January 2016

Cooks, chefs and food manufacturers are looking for natural ways to reduce sodium in recipes in nearly every culture. A big challenge to doing that is taste. Consumers typically describe reduced-sodium foods as lacking in taste and flavor.

Findings of a study in the January issue of the *Journal of Food Science*, published by the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), found that Vietnamese fish sauce added to chicken broth, tomato sauce and coconut curry reduced the amount of sodium chloride by 10-25 percent while still maintaining the perceived deliciousness, saltiness and overall flavor intensity.

Fish sauces are a standard condiment and ingredient in various Southeast Asian cuisines that add an umami element to many foods. Fish sauce is made by combining sea salt and long-jawed black anchovies in large vats to slowly ferment for 8-12 months, during which the protein breaks down to free amino acids and increases the [umami taste](#). It is used as a readily available source of protein and seasoning in the Asia region.

This researchers, a team of researchers (Linh Hue Huynh, Robert Danhi, and See Wan Yan) from Taylor's University in Malaysia showed that fish sauce may be used as a partial substitute ingredient for salt as a means to reduce [sodium content](#) in food without diminishing palatability. These results could aid chefs and [food manufacturers](#) in creating foods lower in sodium content that would meet the needs of consumers, healthcare providers, governmental organizations, and consumer advocacy groups without compromising taste.

More information: Hue Linh Huynh et al. Using Fish Sauce as a Substitute for Sodium Chloride in Culinary Sauces and Effects on Sensory Properties, *Journal of Food Science* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/1750-3841.13171](https://doi.org/10.1111/1750-3841.13171)

Provided by Institute of Food Technologists

APA citation: A new alternative to sodium—Fish sauce (2016, January 18) retrieved 29 July 2022 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2016-01-alternative-sodiumfish-sauce.html>

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