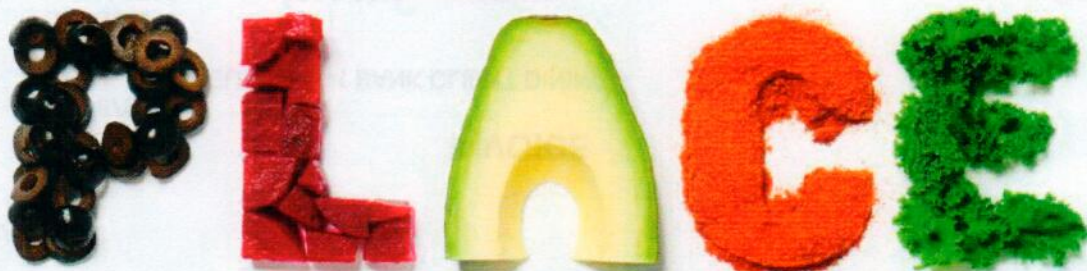
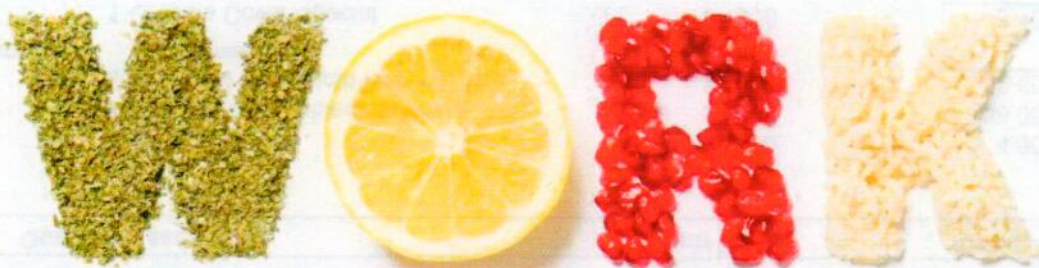
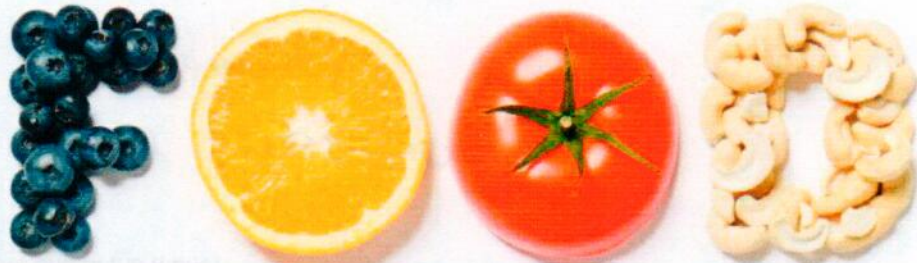


# FMWORLD



The people, companies and foods affecting the catering equation



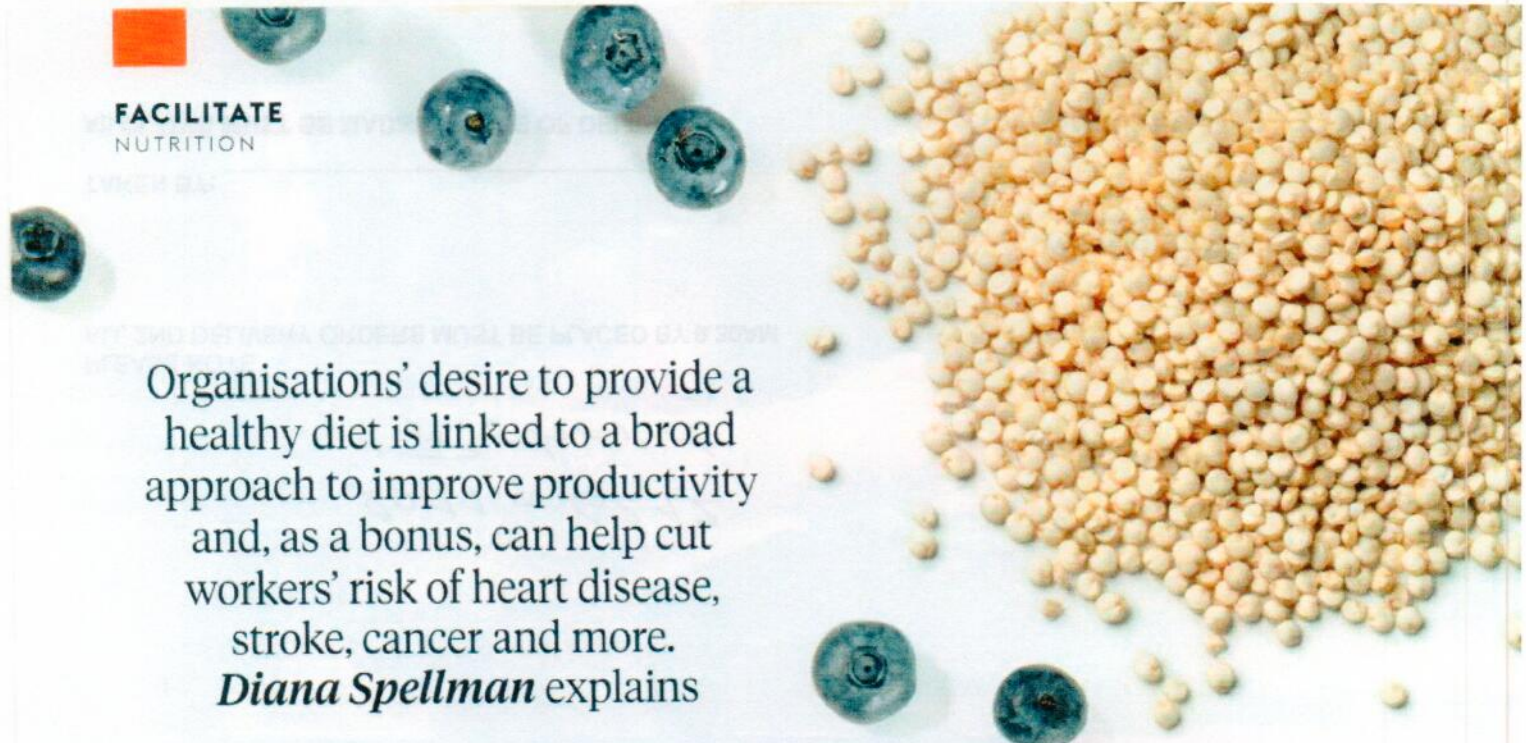
**COOKS BOOKED**  
Why contract catering is becoming more attractive to chefs

**THOUGHT PROCESSED**  
FM's next generation on how to embrace thought diversity

**STREET TRICK**  
How street food vendors are changing the catering mix




FACILITATE  
NUTRITION



Organisations' desire to provide a healthy diet is linked to a broad approach to improve productivity and, as a bonus, can help cut workers' risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer and more.  
*Diana Spellman* explains

# CATERING FOR PRODUCTIVITY



# Y

Maca root, holy basil and liquorice. This goes some way to explaining our obsession with superfoods. We want a quick health fix, rather than a more long-term approach to our own nutrition, and expect foods, super or otherwise, to do all the work.

The idea of foods having medicinal qualities is firmly rooted in science and has been practised successfully for thousands of years. But 21st century marketing has rather taken over, with certain foods having a concerted PR campaign. In reality many are overpriced and over-hyped. Sesame seeds, for example, can be just as nutritious as costly chia seeds. They are a good source of vitamin E, which has been linked to the improvement of cognitive decline as the brain ages. Walnuts, hazelnuts, brazil nuts, filberts, cashews, peanuts, sunflower seeds, flax seed and unhydrogenated nut butters all qualify. Meanwhile, lentils are just

You can barely walk down the high street without having your attentions assaulted by a marketing campaign for superfoods. Pret's protein power lunches and superfood trail mix; EAT's protein pots; and Itsu's hip, humble and healthy salad.

Quinoa, wheatgrass, chia seeds, acai berries, green tea, blueberries and kale have taken over in the health food arena, leaving the humble sandwich and side salad in the cold.

But ask a dietitian and they will give you a very different take. Superfood is not a term commonly used by dietitians, many of whom dispute that particular foods have the health benefits often claimed by advocates of particular 'superfoods'. Like most things, the truth lies somewhere in the middle, and it is more about our approach to food in the West than the foods themselves.

In the West, we want a quick fix. We have a can of energy drink or a strong coffee, which is the equivalent of pouring petrol into a car. In the East, the approach is more long-term, to treat food like the oil in the engine. It's about nourishing the body.

### The Eastern perspective

These different approaches mirror how we combat stress. In the West, people use chocolate, alcohol or antidepressants as a cure, whereas in the East, the focus is on a more holistic, preventative approach using herbs such as ginseng, Peruvian

## MIND THE CHEMICALS

Speaking recently at a BIFM London region event exploring trends in medicinal food, Stephen Minall, founder of food brand consultancy Moving Food, said that it can be surprisingly difficult to be sure about what you're eating.

"It's not always obvious," he said citing the example of a standard potato that has between 15 and 28 chemicals in it including six known carcinogens and 12 hormone disruptors.

"Oranges are typically dyed with a carcinogenic dye that people will ingest if they eat the zest; lemons are waxed, often with petrochemical wax that is then ingested. Mineral left in a plastic water bottle in sunlight, will soon start to absorb carcinogens from the plastic bottle. There are tons of examples of us unwittingly eating carcinogens. Consumers and caterers need to stand up and demand change. The food producers aren't going to do it."

However, said Minall, food products can be good carriers for medicinal products such as pain relief or contraceptive pills, if we deliberately used them as a carrier for medicines.

# TIVITY



## FACILITATE NUTRITION


as nourishing and yet cheaper than quinoa and broccoli has more nutrients (vitamin K and choline) and is cheaper than the much-lauded curly kale.

Other less sexy vegetables also have a key role to play in a medicinal food diet. Beetroot is high in nitrates, which increase blood flow to the parts of the brain related to executive functioning. It also contains vitamin B9, thought to delay the onset of dementia, and carotenoids – believed to boost brain functioning and help ward off depression. With a high vitamin K and folate content, avocados improve memory and concentration while beans release a steady stream of glucose as energy, which the brain needs for concentration. Deepwater fish such as wild salmon, sardines and herring, are rich in omega-3 essential fatty acids – for brain function and anti-inflammatory qualities.

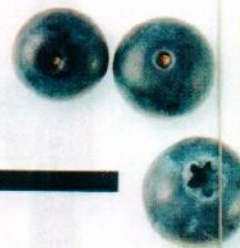
### FMs as navigators

Some might go even further and introduce infusions of herbs known to help certain ailments – echinacea for colds, for example. If you visit a Neal's Yard shop, you'll appreciate the enormous range of medicinal infusions available, all of which can be used to occasionally replace other hot drinks when required. Understanding the functionality of the food or medicine greatly enhances its benefit because of the anticipation and expectation of positive outcomes, well proved in the placebo effect trials.

It is up to facilities professionals and their catering suppliers to help people to navigate their way through the minefield of healthy food. We spend a third of our lives at work, so if we can develop good nutritional habits there it will feed into other parts of our life.



**“THE IDEA OF FOODS HAVING MEDICINAL QUALITIES IS FIRMLY ROOTED IN SCIENCE AND HAS BEEN PRACTISED SUCCESSFULLY FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. BUT 21ST CENTURY MARKETING HAS RATHER TAKEN OVER”**



### BHA LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Three in ten people within the food service sector are not confident of the government's ability to support the sector, up from 25 per cent last year. The British Hospitality Association's (BHA) annual Food Service Management Market Report for 2016 suggests that the EU referendum result is a principal driver of this decline in confidence.

When asked to pinpoint the main challenges that government could address to help FSM businesses succeed, all respondents said that reviewing and consulting with businesses on the National Living Wage would have a positive effect. Half of the respondents requested that government increase the number of apprenticeships and reduce red tape.

The BHA claims that the wider food service management market employs 902,000 people, of which more than half (510,000) are in-house caterers. Staff turnover rates are said to have contracted over the past year.

BHA research found that 81 per cent of FSM businesses saw their net revenues increase between 2014 and 2015, while there was a 4 per cent increase in companies marketing and selling services as an events caterer – 29 per cent of businesses in the sector are now doing so, in what the BHA sees as a growing trend.

Citing current trends including street food, an increasing appetite for healthier options, the provision of in-house brands and casual dining options, BHA also suggested that catering businesses are doing more to apply technology to their operations. A growing proportion of consumers and businesses are using new phone-based payment solutions such as Apple Pay and in-app transactions. In kitchens, BHA suggests that catering operations could be early adopters of equipment connected to the Internet of Things through sensors.



## FACILITATE NUTRITION



### NUTRITION POSITIONS

Kate Taylor, account director for Gather & Gather's Vodafone account, puts forward her suggestions for a more nutritional workplace diet

And it need not be expensive. Avoid trendy superfoods and go for the cheaper, and nutritionally superior options, explaining to your audience the reason behind the decisions. Although many customers will be happy to continue with their existing diets, others might be tempted to try new options and start to think about their health and nutrition in a more holistic way – all of which will benefit them, and the organisation, through increased productivity and engagement.

#### Moderation in all things

And those FM's without extensive catering facilities can still make an impact with a café or even a high-quality vending machine. Freshly brewed green or black tea is full of catechins, which help to keep your brain working well and fight mental fatigue. Coffee is one of the top sources of flavonoids, known to improve heart health and protect cells from the negative effects of ageing. It also has preventative effects against many ailments such as Parkinson's disease, type 2 diabetes, liver disease and depression. And, even better news – the cocoa in dark chocolate improves blood flow to the brain, thus improving brain function as well as improving verbal fluency and cognitive function in elderly people.

The key is moderation. Overindulging in any food sets the body an extra task to expel unnecessary excess. This is all part of the well-being agenda that is increasingly popular in corporates and is being seen as a recruitment and retention tool as well as keeping employees engaged and productive. It also shows that the organisation is being forward-thinking and supportive of its people. ■

**DIANA SPELLMAN** is founder and managing director of catering procurement consultancy Partners In Purchasing

### BIFM RELEVANT BIFM SIG: HOSPITALITY & CATERING

Chairman Simon Biggs, 02076 673880  
 SimonBiggs@bifmpartnership.co.uk  
 www.bifm.org.uk/cateringsig



#### Reduce sugar

Some claims are true and some aren't, but the truth is that sugar is damaging for your teeth and we consume too much. Eat more fresh veg and read food labels – most packaged food contains added sugar even if it's a savoury product, and hot beverages don't need it. We only need 30g a day, which in food terms is less than one can of Coca-Cola or two tablespoons of honey.



#### Become more plant-based

Don't cut out meat completely – just eat less of it. The UK population generally doesn't consume enough fibre and plants can provide a hefty helping. Have a smaller portion of meat and a larger portion of veg to maximise fibre and antioxidant intake. Vitamins and minerals are also in good supply provided the veg is boiled, particularly C and K as well as magnesium and phosphorus from green veg in particular.



#### Pake

A fish salad originated in Hawaii containing fresh tuna, with sesame and soy, onions, chili, nuts and red cabbage. I actually tried some at Sky on Friday and it was delicious, which means we'll have this in our business soon! It ticks the boxes of being naturally low in sugar, high in Omega-3 fats from the fresh tuna (which the body cannot make so has to obtain from food) and fibre from the veg – tick, tick, tick. Add in some more naturally occurring fats from the nuts and this dish is a winner.



#### Savoury yoghurt

I came across this first from Sarah Wilson (I Quit Sugar). With sugar taking the lead in the media, this one actually has some benefit. Add natural calcium from the yoghurt (opt for a Greek or natural variety, not low-fat) and serve with avocado, roasted cherry toms (when you roast them their lycopene becomes active, which helps fight toxic cells) and toasted pine nuts.



#### Protein

From powder to poultry, protein is upping its credentials in keeping us fuller for longer and is no longer just the staple of gym bunnies. It tends to take a longer time to digest within the gut therefore there is truth in the first point, however, extreme intake may result in kidney stones, so make sure vegetable intake is high to match the protein with adequate fibre.