

food for thought

Salt alternatives

Seagreens' products offer cooks a natural, low sodium option to salt, finds Andrew Kay

Seagreens is a very small company in Sussex that, through an Anglo Norwegian joint venture, harvest wild arctic seaweeds that respond to many of our pandemics from autism to obesity and degenerative diseases as well as providing a source of micro nutrients missing from soil and modern foods. It was sounding more like a health supplement for a while until I discovered that it can also be a great alternative to salt. My interest was suddenly roused.

Seagreens produce several seaweed products, including Seagreens food capsules, and they are available from Waitrose, medical practitioners, nutritionists and many health and organic food shops. All products and ingredients are certified to Demeter and Soil Association Standards for use in biodynamic and organic food.

They have also begun to supply other, carefully chosen food producers who want to include Seagreens branded ingredients in their own products. These 'Brand Partners' include Breannock Herb Workshop in Aberdeen, which supplies nutritional supplements to children in and beyond the Camphill Communities, Bart Spices in Bristol (who won a West of England gold Food Award for their mix of rock salt and Seagreens), Artisan Breads from Whitstable, and Waitrose who produce a salt and seaweed rub for fish – and they also sell their consumer products! Just to name a few.

In 2007 Seagreens was selected for independent Food Innovation studies at Sheffield Hallam University. The research, completed this March, confirmed Seagreens wrack seaweeds to be free of all the likely ocean-borne environmental contaminants, toxic metals and microbial pathogens. When Seagreens began in 1998 it became 'Britain's first organic ocean-to-table seaweed producer'



(*The Times*, October 2005) and in 2003 was approved for use in biodynamic as well as organic foods and farming systems.

It is Seagreens' 10th anniversary this year and the company is going from strength to strength.

But what does it taste like? I hear you ask.

Well as a seaweed fan I have already tasted plenty of the stuff over the years and let me say that some of it tastes vile. I have recently been using a mix of salt and dried seaweed that I purchased in a 'gourmet' food shop here in Brighton and I absolutely love the effect that it has on food. It certainly adds a new

depth of flavour above the plain savoury or simply salty.

The Seagreens product is an entirely seaweed-based salt substitute and has a great flavour. The saltiness is subtle – less biting than sea salt – and there is certainly no 'fishy' taste whatsoever.

I liked it, it tasted good and my only worry is that its dark green colour could taint the natural colour of food, which salt obviously does not. It can be used dry and ground in a spice mill as a condiment, it can be soaked in water and added to salads or even stews. I nibbled it like a snack and it worked for me.

As a replacement for salt in a diet it clearly has twofold values: reducing salt is, of course, an excellent action to be taking but the detoxifying effects of the seaweed would appear to be excellent too.

Add to this that it is a sustainable resource, cropped from naturally renewing beds of the seaweed growing in the wild in remarkably clean ocean waters.

Whether you choose to try the milled condiment, dried pieces or simply go the route of supplement capsules, there is clearly much evidence of the beneficial qualities of this product.

→ Seagreens products are currently available nationwide, including Planet Janet, Hove; Down to Earth, Hove; Taj Natural Foods, Brighton; Infinity Foods Wholefood, Brighton and Hove, and The Children's Clinic, Brighton and Hove.

→ For more information call Seagreens on 0845 064 0040 or visit www.seagreens.com

