How Wasabia Japonica Works and How it benefits you...

*Wasabia Japonica* has been grown and eaten in Japan for centuries. It is believed that the daily consumption of *Wasabia japonica* improves the health and fights off a large number of illnesses. This has now been borne out by a large (and increasing) number of scientific studies on the actions of the naturally occurring ingredients within the *Wasabia japonica* plant. These studies appear to confirm the folklore that surrounds *wasabi japonica* and its medicinal properties. A number of studies have shown that the active ingredients in *Wasabia japonica* are able to kill a number of different types of cancer cells, reduce the possibility of getting blood clots, encourages the body's own defences to discard cells that have started to mutate, and acts as an anti-bacterial and anti-fungal agent against food poisons.

Some of these effects are now, see References at end, and enable the consumer to realize that there are significant benefits to the daily consumption of wasabi in their diet. It has been determined "that *Wasabia japonica*… a potent functional food for human health".

True *Wasabia Japonica* is a plant that belongs to the Brassica family. Originally from the mountains of Japan, where it grows in the mountain streams in specially built centuries old growing beds, it demands the highest environmental conditions. It is for this reason that the production of very high quality water grown *Wasabia japonica* has been reducing throughout the world as the environment becomes polluted. Acid rain in Japan and Asia are the main causes of the decline in the growing areas in that region. The last *wasabi japonica* growing bed to have been built in Japan is reputed to be at least 200 years old.

The growing of high quality water *Wasabia japonica* has been recognized as difficult, and was done by a few families in Japan. As pollution degraded the growing environment, together with the fact that young people do not want to work in the unwelcoming environment in the high mountains, the numbers of families growing *Wasabia japonica* using the traditional methods have fallen away. In order to try and make up for the reduction in high quality *Wasabia japonica* being supplied as a fresh vegetable, the Japanese food industry have provided a solution. Their solution was to provide a powder or paste that consists of European Horseradish (*Armoracia rusticana*, or *Armoracia Lapthifolia* or *Cholearia Armoracia*) mixed with mustard seed and FDA approved colouring. This is the powder or paste that is commonly found in the food markets, is bright green in colour, and clears the sinuses when eaten. While it tastes and acts in a similar fashion to real grated wasabi (*Wasabia Japonica*) as a food item, this product does not contain all the active ingredients of the real wasabi plant.

It has been found that the highest activity compounds among "food-stuffs tested was found in the stems of *Wasabia japonica". This high activity compound has been found to:

">`"inhibit the development of lung tumours in mice"

">`"have potent antibacterial activity"

">`"glandular stomach carcinogenesis…was suppressed by …*Wasabia japonica""

">`"play "an important role for antiplatelet and anticancer activities"

">`potentially be a "potent functional food for keeping human health"
increase the abundance of protective detoxification enzymes

have a "protective effect...on the colon epithelium"

potentially "be a significant component of...anticarcinogenic activity"

eliminate precancerous cells...well after initial exposure to chemical mutagens and carcinogens"

"inhibit the neoplastic effects of various carcinogens at a number of organ sites"

"inhibit the growth...of human leukaemia HL60 and human myeloblastic leukaemia-1 cells"

"suppress the growth of preclinical tumours and contribute to the well established decreased cancer incidence associated with a vegetable rich diet"

"have strong antimicrobial activity...and reduction of viable bacteria"

be involved with "the bioconversion of a dietary glucosinolate to a potentially anticarcinogenic isothiocyanate"

"inhibit the development of tumours"

possibly "protect against the development of colorectal cancer"

"a novel "dietary" means of reducing cancer risk"

In order to ensure that the indicated benefits are not diluted Namida® wasabi is grown under the strictest environmental conditions in a controlled environment. No pesticides, herbicides or non-organic sprays are used on the water grown wasabi. All inputs are certified organic. The wasabi is hand picked, sorted and washed prior to grading. The highest grade wasabi is selected for use under the Namida® brand name. This wasabi is carefully handled and processed to ensure the minimal loss of any of the active ingredients naturally occurring in the wasabi.

The growing and processing system complies with EN14000 environmental standards and ISO 9000 quality standards.

Reference List

Research and Scientific Papers


Other references

Reuters; October 14:1994 - Japan researcher says "wasabi" helps fight cancer.

Biotechnology and Medical Industry of Japan; April 5:1991 - Nihon University finds component of wasabi inhibits thrombus formation.