

Probiotic olives to combat food intolerances and improve health

LOCATION: Jaén

LENGTH VTR: 1'41"

SUMMARY: The first stage of seasoning olives is putting them in salt water. This way, they lose their bitterness. A team from the University of Jaén has discovered that, during this process, the probiotic properties of the olive are strengthened – it becomes a functional food that improves digestion, especially for people with food intolerances. The study is ongoing and aims to find other benefits which will help to tackle diabetes and neurological diseases.

VTR

This is the first stage of seasoning olives – putting them in brine. As they ferment in the salt water, they lose their bitterness. In this laboratory at the University of Jaén, it has been proven that this process causes lactic acid bacteria to multiply – and they have probiotic properties that aid digestion.

HikmateAbriouel
Microbiologist at the University
of Jaén

"Once the fermented olive is ingested, the bacteria will go into the intestine and produce beneficial effects."

These beneficial effects include...

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"Preventing microbial infections caused by pathogenic bacteria such as Escherichia coli, salmonella and listeria... And also improving the digestibility of lactose, because these bacteria break down lactose."

The bacterium's resistance to acidity and bile, and its plant origin, has health benefits for everyone, especially those who are lactose intolerant or follow a vegetarian diet. This adds even more benefits to those we already knew about.

Blas Palacios
Olive manufacturer

"We know the different properties of olives themselves: they are high in fibre and omega-3 and are quite healthy. And we actually mention them when selling the product because they are qualities that consumers are looking for nowadays."

The type of olive or seasoning doesn't alter these properties.

HikmateAbriouel
Microbiologist at the University
of Jaén

"These bacteria are present from the start until the end of the fermentation process, but at the end there is a higher number of them."

The health authorities recommend 25 grams or 7 olives a day in order to guarantee these benefits. The study is continuing to search for other advantages that olives may have in tackling neurological disorders or diabetes.