Study: Red wine helps burn fat

By Science Daily

Drinking red grape juice or wine – in moderation – could improve the health of overweight people by helping them burn fat better, according to a new study coauthored by an Oregon State University researcher.

The findings suggest that consuming dark-colored grapes, whether eating them or drinking juice or wine, might help people better manage obesity and related metabolic disorders such as fatty liver.

Neil Shay, a biochemist and molecular biologist in OSU's College of Agricultural Sciences, was part of a study team that exposed human liver and fat cells grown in the lab to extracts of four natural chemicals found in Muscadine grapes, a dark-red variety native to the southeastern United States.

Read the whole story

Alcohol not a good choice for athletes

By Devon Jackson, Outside

If you exercise, chances are you also drink. I know this because according to a study from Northwestern Medicine, people tend to drink more alcohol on the days they've exercised. Especially beer.

It could be because we reward ourselves with a post-run brewski, or because we've used up all of our willpower on exercise, so we have none left to deny ourselves that drink or two. Whatever the reason, if you're drinking thinking that it'll help you sleep, relax your muscles, numb the pain, or increase blood flow to help you recover faster, as they say in AA, that's just stinkin' thinkin'.

"It's detrimental to drink alcohol after any type of exercise or workout," says Professor Matthew Barnes of New Zealand's Massey University School of Sport and Medicine. "I've never really seen anything that says it's useful as far as recovery."

He's also never seen anything that says alcohol is useful for comptetion. Barnes' most recent study on the impact of alcohol on sports performance and recovery in men concluded that "the consumption of even low doses of alcohol prior to athletic endeavour should be discouraged due to the ergolytic effects of alcohol on endurance performance." Ergolytic meaning performance impairing. These effects, the study's authors wrote, "are likely to inhibit recovery and adaptation to exercise."

Read the whole story

Report reveals how much wine is being produced each year – and who's drinking it

By Will Lyons, Wall Street Journal

How many bottles of wine do you think were produced last year? A friend and I were trying to figure out an answer to this question over supper the other day. I won't embarrass myself by revealing how far off I was, but let's just say it was by a very long way.

The latest figures from International Wine & Spirit Research (IWSR), a London-based drinks research group, in a report commissioned by Vinexpo, estimate that in 2013, 3.2 billion cases of wine were produced. That's 38.4 billion bottles—quite an astonishing number. The majority, 54 percent, is red wine, compared with 37 percent for white and 9 percent for rosé.

Who drinks it all? The quick answer is Europe and the U.S. But if I were to ask you to name the No. 1 wine-consuming country by volume, I suspect you might guess France. Wrong.

According to the IWSR, the U.S. is still the biggest market by volume, drinking a total of 339 million cases of wine in 2013. This was above France's 296 million cases, Italy's 288 million, Germany's 274 million and China's 144 million (which made it the world's fifth largest consumer of wine). The U.K. came in sixth, drinking a total of 133 million cases.

Per capita wine consumption is perhaps the more interesting figure. Here, Italy leads the pack, ahead of France, Switzerland, Portugal and Austria. In terms of total market value (which nation spends the most on wine), the top three are the U.S., France and the U.K., with Britain forecast to increase its spending over the next three years, nudging France into third place. The IWSR predicts that by 2018, the top two still-wine markets by value, the U.S. and U.K., will be worth $33.2 billion and $17.1 billion respectively.

Read the whole story

Craft beer hurting wine industry

By Mark Anderson, Sacramento Business Journal

Wine-industry experts gathering in Sacramento on Wednesday said wine sales have been hurt by the growing popularity of craft beer, ciders and even mixed drinks.

A panel of industry leaders at the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium said the vintners face a number of challenges. One is that the casual drinker's choice for an everyday beverage is increasingly beer.

Sales of inexpensive table wine – bottles under $7 – fell in 2014. Sales of premium wine grew – but the everyday wines are the foundation of the wine market, and those are the wines people start with before they eventually buy premium wines.

Read the whole story

Vitamin drinks may not be a healthy choice

By Anahad O'Connor, New York Times

Companies are increasingly adding vitamins and minerals to juices, sports drinks and bottled water, responding to a growing consumer demand for these products. Even though the

amounts of added nutrients in these drinks are typically small, some nutrition scientists are concerned that through their overall diets, many people may be ingesting levels of vitamins and other nutrients that are not only unnecessary, but potentially harmful.

“You have vitamins and minerals that occur naturally in foods, and then you have people taking supplements, and then you have all these fortified foods,” said Mridul Datta, an assistant professor in the department of nutrition science at Purdue University. “It adds up to quite an excess. There’s the potential for people to get a lot more of these vitamins than they need.”

Today more than ever, studies show, the average person is exposed to unusually high levels of vitamins and minerals. Already, more than half of all adults in the United States take a multivitamin or dietary supplement. Bread, milk and other foods are often fortified with folic acid, niacin and vitamins A and D.

A study published in July found that many people are exceeding the safe limits of nutrient intakes established by the Institute of Medicine. And research shows that people who take dietary supplements are often the ones who need them the least.

Read the whole story

California vintners digging

up vines

By Chris Macias, Sacramento Bee

Faced with stagnant sales of low-priced wine and a glut of overseas competitors, grape growers in the Central Valley are ripping out their vines and replacing them with more profitable crops such as almonds.

The attrition of vineyards was highlighted in Wednesday's State of the Industry briefing at the Unified Wine & Grape Symposium, the annual trade show and convention for the state's wine industry. The presentation by Bay Area wine consultant Jon Fredrikson drew a standing-room-only crowd of more than 1,500 to the ballroom of the Hyatt Regency hotel across from the state Capitol.

Farmers, vintners and other wine professionals who gathered for the event learned that the market for lower-priced wines declined in 2014, while bottles priced at $10 and above enjoyed growth as the economy improved

According to a survey by Gomberg, Fredrikson & Associates, the consulting and research firm co-owned by Fredrikson, wine shipments to the U.S. from all sources, including foreign countries, rose to 375 million cases in 2014, a 1 percent increase over the previous year. An estimated 224 million of those cases were produced in California.

Read the whole story

No easy answer to whether orange or juice is better

By Maria Godoy, NPR

We all could probably eat more fruits and vegetables. But if forced to choose between whole fruit or a glass of juice, which one seems more healthful?

The general advice is to opt for the fruit, since juicing can destroy some of the beneficial compounds fruit contains and strip it of fiber – which most us don't get enough of. And let's face it: Most juice contains a lot of sugar, which we might be trying to cut down on.

So our interest was piqued when we spotted a study suggesting that, when it comes to oranges, juice might actually unlock more carotenoids and flavonoids – both beneficial phytonutrients – than an equivalent amount of fruit.

To figure that out, German and Saudi researchers started with a big batch of fresh navel oranges. They analyzed the fruit in three forms: peeled segments, a mashed-up puree and as juice, both fresh-squeezed and pasteurized. They found that levels of vitamin C and carotenoids were basically the same in the juice and the unprocessed fruit, while levels of flavonoids were significantly lower.

Read the whole story

Individual experience flavors the wine in a glass

By Dave McIntyre, Washington Post

The white in my glass is the color of straw: raw material ready to be transformed. As I swirl the glass, light flashes through the wine, and I sense a fleeting image of a happy young girl as her blond hair catches the sun. She smells of flowers and grass, and of potential.

The red in my other glass is translucent, a vibrant cherry color that seems to filter light and reality. Yes, it’s pinot noir.

Dave McIntyre is the wine columnist for The Washington Post. He also blogs at dmwineline.com. View Archive
Google+
Part of wine’s charm is that it conjures fancy. Wine is difficult to describe, once you’ve gone beyond the concept of mere fermented grape juice. That’s why you’ll read over-the-top descriptions of “gobs of fruit” and “lashings of oak.” (Wine should be aged in barrels, not flogged by them, though I once met a winemaker in Tuscany who said he used small barrels to “spank” wines that weren’t behaving.)

Read the whole story

Reducing food waste could

ease climate change

By Roff Smith, National Geographic

More than a third of all of the food that's produced on our planet never reaches a table. It's either spoiled in transit or thrown out by consumers in wealthier countries, who typically buy too much and toss the excess. This works out to roughly 1.3 billion tons of food, worth nearly $1 trillion at retail prices.

Aside from the social, economic, and moral implications of that waste—in a world where an estimated 805 million people go to bed hungry each night—the environmental cost of producing all that food, for nothing, is staggering.

The water wastage alone would be the equivalent of the entire annual flow of the Volga—Europe's largest river—according to a UN report. The energy that goes into the production, harvesting, transporting, and packaging of that wasted food, meanwhile, generates more than 3.3 billion metric tons of carbon dioxide. If food waste were a country, it would be the world's third largest emitter of greenhouse gases, behind the U.S. and China.

John Mandyck, the chief sustainability officer of United Technologies, a U.S.-based engineering and refrigerated transport firm, says that food waste can be mitigated by improving the "cold chain," which comprises refrigerated transport and storage facilities. His company hosted the first World Cold Chain Summit in London last November.

Read the whole story

Lack of water tests vineyard managers

By Ed Joyce, Capital Public Radio

More than three years of drought has reduced reservoir storage in California and groundwater supply. Some wine grape growers in Amador County are worried the limited resource could make this season more challenging.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said that, barring “epic rain and snowfall,” the drought will continue through at least the spring and likely linger into the summer in California. That’s a worry for wine grape growers that rely on groundwater.

“There’s a lot of concern out there amongst growers that I work with in the four counties in the Central Sierra,” said Lynn Wunderlich, a Farm Advisor with UC Davis Cooperative Extension. She works with growers in El Dorado, Amador, Calaveras and Tuolumne counties.

Wunderlich said the rainfall in each of those counties varies significantly. Because of the drought, Wunderlich said some growers are extending their wells or digging new wells to increase groundwater supply.

Read the whole story