

The History and Health Benefits of Cultured Vegetables

History

- Foods have been fermented for thousands of years
- While the earliest fermented food was probably alcohol, fermented vegetables have a rich history in many cultures
- Sauerkraut, kimchi and beet kvass are all forms of cultured vegetables
- Any vegetables can be fermented and would have been used as an early method for preserving foods

History

- Vegetables often require some form of processing to make them more edible
- They are considered low-acid foods, making them more prone to deterioration by micro-organisms
- They are the perfect food for food poisoning in a moist environment
- Fermenting vegetables makes them more of an acid and therefore prevents spoilage

Health Benefits

- Number one health benefit is making the vegetables more digestible and the nutrients more bioavailable
- Each vegetable has its own health benefits based on the vitamin, mineral and phytonutrient content
- There is very little research on the cultured vegetables themselves

Health Benefits

- In other studies, consumption of a high sugar and high fat diet is related to a lower levels of intestinal flora and higher levels of depression and anxiety – direct link between the gut and production of serotonin
- Fermented foods increase B vitamins, magnesium and zinc as well improve the quality of the protein (amino acids)

Health Benefits

- Fermented foods in a traditional diet also help keep blood sugar stable and low inflammation both in the gut and the body
- Phytonutrients in the cultured vegetables also appear to help regulate how the good bacteria function
- A study of fermented carrot juice found that it increased iron availability

Health Benefits

- Like all fermented foods, cultured vegetables have anti-microbial and antioxidant properties
- They also aid the digestion of other foods in a meal
- Fermented vegetables with a PH of 4 or lower are stable for 12 months
- The key is finding the cultured vegetables you like best

References:

1. Fermented foods, microbiota, and mental health: ancient practice meets nutritional psychiatry, Eva M Selhub^{1*}†, Alan C Logan²† and Alison C Basted³†Journal of Physiological Anthropology 2014, 33:2
2. Probiotics and their fermented food products are beneficial for health, S. Parvez¹†, K.A. Malik², S. Ah Kang³ and H.-Y. Kim¹, Journal of Applied Microbiology, Volume 100, Issue 6, pages 1171–1185, June 2006
3. Improved iron solubility in carrot juice fermented by homo- and hetero-fermentative lactic acid bacteriaS. W. Bergqvist, , A. -S. Sandberg, N. -G. Carlsson and T. Andlid, Department of Chemistry and Bioscience/Food Science, Chalmers University of Technology, 2004
4. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x0560e/x0560e06.htm>
5. <http://fbns.ncsu.edu/USDAARS/ Acrobatpubs/P151-189/p164.pdf>