

MUSHROOMS ON THE MENU AT THE MATER HOSPITAL

By Leah Bramich

The AMGA, along with Nutrition Research Australia (NRAUS) are pleased to announce an exciting development within the 3-year project *MU20003: Educating the Food Industry about the Nutritional Benefit of Mushrooms*. **The Mater Hospital has been engaged to run a special mushroom-focused menu for patients, which will run from late August to early December this year.**

This Hort Innovation project, funded by the Australian mushroom industry aims to tackle some of the nation's biggest nutrition problems with mighty mushrooms. Engaging key players in the food industry, including Hospitals, Aged Care, Quick Service Restaurants and Food Manufacturers and identifying opportunities for Australian mushrooms to be included in menus, the projects objective is to improve health outcomes on a large scale.

The Mater Hospital is a busy private hospital based in Brisbane that provides a wide range of adult surgical, medical and cancer services, including intensive and coronary care, day surgery, day oncology and day respite, as well as busy medical, cancer and surgical units.

In 2013, Mater Private Hospital Brisbane, was the first hospital in Australia to implement room service. This private hospital study reported an increase in nutritional intake, improved patient satisfaction and reduced plate waste and patient meal costs compared to traditional models. This award winning in-room dining service allows patients choose from an a-la-carte menu and dial the Room Service Call Centre to place an order. The dining service delivers restaurant quality dishes within 45-minutes, and orders can be placed from 6.30am to 7pm.



Mater Hospital actively seeks to include foods on the menu that are cost effective, versatile, and nutritious and favours locally sourced, sustainable produce. Mater also have a particular focus on plant-based diets - therefore mushrooms were an ideal ingredient to feature.

The special mushroom menu has been developed for patients by celebrity chef, and Mater Hospital ambassador Luke Mangan, in conjunction with Mater Director of Dietetics and Food Services Sally McCray. The menu features a range of delicious mushroom dishes, which are available from breakfast through to dinner, with mushroom meal options catering to all dietary requirements.

The impact of the mushroom menu will be tracked by number of mushroom meals ordered, and plate wastage, along with meal costs.

The mushroom menu forms part of a 'menu intervention' program, which was developed by NRAUS, taking a 'top-down, bottom-up' approach to nutrition education. Not only are mushrooms the feature of the hospital menu for three months, but the intervention also includes nutrition and culinary education, delivered via a series of in-person workshops and educational materials for hospital staff, including dietitians and nurses, chefs and kitchen staff, as well as the in-room dining team. The workshops will be delivered in mid-October, and are supported by mushroom education materials delivered to patients, staff and community, completing the wholistic approach to the nutrition education program.

The intervention specifically involves:

- **A mushroom-focused menu developed by Chef Luke Mangan:** weekly menu containing a different mushroom dish for four weeks, rotated over three months from 23rd August 2023 to 6th December 2023.
- **Patient education leaflet:** educational material on the nutritional benefits, how to use and inspiring recipes at home, to support the mushroom-focussed menu.
- **Staff education:** mushroom-focussed nutrition and culinary masterclass delivered to chefs and catering staff, dietitians, nurses and customer service staff involved with patient menu ordering.
- **Community education:** social media campaign driving key nutrition messages and inspiration around Australian mushrooms.

The Educating the Food Industry project is designed to utilise mushrooms in institutional meals and menus to solve nutritional problems. The experience will be monitored, and a case study recorded, with the ambition to share the impact and learnings with the wider institutional foodservice industry, in turn creating awareness and inspiration about the versatility of mushrooms.

FOOD INDUSTRY – AUSTRALIAN MUSHROOMS NUTRITION EDUCATION RESOURCES

The Educational Toolkit is now complete. These resources are specifically designed to upskill the food

industry and consolidate the evidence-based nutritional advice from NRAUS, based on years of scientific research, and extensive culinary tips from Chef Adam Moore.

The educational tool kit includes:

- Three educational fact sheets:
 1. Mushrooms: Pro culinary tips and tricks
 2. Mushrooms: The x-factor ingredient for plant-based eating
 3. Mushrooms: From farm to you
- eBook: *Mighty Mushrooms - The X-Factor Ingredient for Food Service*
- Food Service kitchen poster '*Which mushrooms are best when cooking?*'
- Three (new) educational videos:

1. Australian Mushrooms Nutrition and Culinary tips <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xhc5UZczyj8&t=6s>

Watch Chef Adam and Nutrition Scientist Dr. Flav provide their top tips to making the most of the culinary and nutrition benefits of the Mighty Mushrooms.

2. Australian Mushrooms and Plant based diets: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQHDoeHV7_M&t=5s

Watch Chef Adam Moore and Dr. Flav to learn about the growing plant forward food trend and why mushrooms are the X-factor ingredient.

3. Australian Mushrooms - Farm to Plate: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g79aVFHLPjQ&t=5s>

Watch Chef Adam Moore and Dr. Flav with Rowan Anderson at Regal Mushrooms farm, NSW to see and learn how Australian mushrooms are grown and produced.

These resources will be communicated broadly to the food service industry, provided as an ongoing resource for culinary schools, used to assist the upcoming 'mushroom menu intervention' case studies, and presented to attendees at the very exciting 'Mushroom Masterclass' conference roadshow, which will be delivered in the last year of the project.

Food industry professionals can view or download educational resources from the AMGA website: <https://australianmushroomgrowers.com.au/food-industry/>