

## MEDIA RELEASE

24 February 2022



### NEW RESEARCH LOOKS TO MUSHROOMS TO SOLVE NUTRITION PROBLEMS

New Australian research has begun, to uncover ways the humble Aussie mushroom could solve some of the nation's biggest nutrition problems.

With the Australian Food Industry representing around \$172 Billion AUD (1), the industry has a profound influence on the nation's overall health. Research leaders, Nutrition Research Australia (NRAUS) aim to identify nutrition problems within the Australian Food Industry's Food Service Sector - and use mushrooms to solve them.

CEO of NRAUS, Dr. Flavia Fayet-Moore explains that the humble Australian mushroom has unique nutritional and culinary properties, which make them valuable commodities in the nation's food supply. "Mushrooms are neither a plant nor an animal, but actually a fungi, and have a very unique set of nutrients that are typically only found in grains, vegetables, or animals- like vitamin D. The science is clear, and the opportunity to increase mushroom consumption via the food supply may lead to several improvements in the health of Australians."

The research aims to engage with a high quantum of influence organisations, such as Hospitals, Aged Care, Quick Service Restaurants and Food Manufacturers to identify opportunities for Australian mushrooms to be included in menus, to improve health outcomes.

"In this project, we will engage with and educate food industry professionals on the nutritional and health benefits of mushrooms and encourage the food service sector to use fresh mushrooms (*Agaricus bisporus*) on menus to not only improve their nutritional profile, but most importantly, taste. This may be an easy and effective strategy to improve the health of Australians." Dr. Fayet-Moore added.

One of the nutrition problems the team believe mushrooms can help solve is vitamin D deficiency, a nutrition problem for one in four Australians, particularly for those who spend the majority of their days indoors. Vitamin D deficiency can lead to significant health complications if left unaddressed.

"Research shows that many residents in aged care facilities have insufficient vitamin D. By simply including sun exposed mushrooms in aged care menus, it could boost their vitamin D intake and potentially solve a serious nutritional issue in aged care facilities." says Project lead Dr Flavia Fayet-Moore.

As consumer demand trends continue to lower their intake of animal foods, the team highlights the uniqueness of mushrooms as being a nutritious and tasty meat alternative that remains undiscovered by many consumers.

The team will also work alongside culinary educators, such as Tafes, to provide mushroom nutrition education to curriculums to help educate the food service industry at the grassroots level.

This three-year research project is managed by the Australian Mushroom Growers Association and funded by Hort Innovation using the mushroom research and development levy funds from the Australian Government.

- ENDS -

### MEDIA CONTACT

Leah Bramich - AMGA Communications Manager  
[leah.bramich@amga.asn.au](mailto:leah.bramich@amga.asn.au) | 0450 504 675

1. Foresight Fi. The nature of the foodservice market. 2020.