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Use the **editorial address** when writing about the newsletter—see the panel on page 4.

## Microplastics found in 90 percent of table salt

*A new study looked at sea, rock, and lake salt sold around the world. Here's what salt-users need to know.*

### Key Points:

- ✚ Microplastics were found in sea salt several years ago. But how extensively plastic bits are spread throughout the most commonly used seasonings remains unclear.
- ✚ Now, new research shows microplastics in 90 percent of the table salt brands sampled worldwide.

Of 39 salt brands tested, 36 had microplastics in them, according to a new analysis by researchers in South Korea and Greenpeace East Asia. Using prior salt studies, this new research is the first of its scale to look at the geographical spread of microplastics in table salt and their correlation to where plastic pollution is found in the environment.

“The findings suggest that human ingestion of microplastics via marine products is strongly related to emissions in a given region” said Seung-Kyu Kim, a marine science professor at Incheon National University in South Korea.

Salt samples from 21 countries in Europe,

North and South America, Africa and Asia were analysed. The three brands that did not contain microplastics were from Taiwan (refined sea salt), China (refined rock salt) and France (unrefined sea salt produced by solar evaporation).

The study was published by the journal *Environmental Science and Technology*.

The density of microplastics found in salt varied dramatically among different brands, but those from Asian brands were especially high, the study found. The highest quantities of microplastics were found in salt sold in Indonesia. Asia is a hot spot for plastic pollution. Indonesia – with 54,720km of coastline – ranked in an unrelated study as suffering the second-worst level of plastic pollution in the world.

In another indicator of the geographic density of plastic pollution, microplastic levels were highest in sea salt, followed by lake salt and then rock salt.

The new study is the fifth on salt published in recent years. Others have been done by Spain, China, the United States and by a group from France, Britain and Malaysia.

Sherri Mason, a Professor at the State University of New York who partnered with researchers at the University of Minnesota on a separate salt study, said the new findings add “another piece to

## Microplastics found in 90 percent of salt ~ Continued:

the puzzle” in assessing the impact of microplastics.

“The fact that they found higher counts in Asia is interesting. While not surprising, you still have to have the data,” she says. “The earlier studies found traces of microplastics in salt products sold in those countries, but we haven’t known how much.”

The new study, Professor Mason says, “shows us that microplastics are ubiquitous. It’s not a matter of if you are buying sea salt in England, you are safe.”

***Is this harmful?*** The new study estimates that the average adult consumes approximately 2,000 microplastics per year through salt. What that means remains a mystery.

Source: National Geographic.

## Christmas in Australia

Two centuries after European settlement we still cling to the old northern hemisphere customs, especially when it comes to festive foods. In early times families did venture into the bush for a picnic under the eucalypts, but a Dickensian Christmas pudding still formed the centrepiece of the ‘table’! Today some of us even still serve up hot midday Christmas celebratory dinners!



**Comment: Be wary of Christmas Pudding if it contains bicarb soda - the “pud” will be loaded in sodium!**

## Dietitians Top (Healthy) Christmas Gift Ideas

Do-it-yourself recipe books, herb and vegetable seeds, healthy hampers and home-made chickpea snacks – the Australian Association of Dietitians have compiled this fabulous list of healthy Christmas gift ideas.



These gift ideas should provide plenty of inspiration:

Put together a little recipe book (on Word – nothing fancy!) for family and friends, which includes a week worth of breakfast, lunch and dinner ideas. Base your recipes on seasonal produce, which will be both delicious and cheap. **Joyce Haddad, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Prepare homemade pickles, vinegar, salad dressings or infused extra virgin olive oil. **Caroline Trickey, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Make small bags of healthy snacks, such as roasted chickpeas with honey, rosemary or other herbs. A great way to ‘up’ intake of fibre and low GI carbs, but also feels quite indulgent! **Chloe McLeod, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

If you have your own vegetable garden, put together bunches of homegrown herbs, such as rosemary, parsley or basil, or trays of vegetables you may have in excess. **Caroline Trickey, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

## **Dietitians Top (Healthy) Christmas Gift Ideas ~ Continued:**

Cooking workshops for adults or kids are a great way to increase a loved one's repertoire of home cooking using real ingredients. **Melanie Marino, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

A selection of teas and an 'old fashioned' tea pot. **Simone Austin, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Fruit platters, fruit baskets or fruit bowls are a great way to enjoy all the beautiful seasonal fruit on offer. **Milly Smith, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Give loved ones some herb and veggie seeds to start their own garden. There are some fantastic kits out there, or simply pick up sachets from your local garden store. Fresh herbs and vegetables are so tasty and nutritious. **Melanie Marino, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Make up bottles of homemade nut and cinnamon muesli, tied with twine and labelled in fancy handwriting. A homemade gift is always lovely! **Lisa Donaldson, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

A foodie walking tour. There are lots of variations, including a "foodie" walking tour I recently discovered in Melbourne! **Simone Austin, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Give your friends and family a pleasant Christmas surprise by gifting a hamper of fruit or healthy home-made snacks like mini muffins. This practical gift will give the family a break from cooking and encourage healthy snacking, which is good for everyone! **Gabrielle Maston, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Make up calendars which feature your own recipes and photography. A fun, useful and practical gift! **Lisa Donaldson, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Please send us your Salt Skip news, tips and salt-free or low sodium recipes... email to [Malcolm.Riley@csiro.au](mailto:Malcolm.Riley@csiro.au). Thanks!

Healthy cookbooks or cooking equipment, such as a new non-stick frying pan. **Themis Chryssidis, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Rather than store-bought biscuits, bake some biscuits at home, then pop into a jar with a personal label. Go with recipes which include healthier ingredients, and are easy to make! **Anika Rouf, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

A simple soccer ball or frisbee can bring hours of fun outside. Or if you're heading to the beach, a boogie board makes a top Christmas present. Christmas time in Australia can be a great time to get everyone outdoors and away from the TV screen. **Asleigh Feltham, Accredited Practising Dietitian.**

Source: Dietitians Association of Australia  
[www.daa.asn.au](http://www.daa.asn.au)

## **Our SSN Christmas Wish**

The Salt Skip Committee would like to wish you and yours the compliments of the season. We wish you an enjoyable and peaceful Christmas break. Please stay safe on the roads if you are travelling to family and friends.

"Happy Christmas" everyone!



**Become a Salt Skipper**

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# Grilled Rosemary Chicken



**Ingredients:** (Serves 6 – a Christmas Day treat)

6 medium skinless, boneless chicken breast halves  
1 teaspoon finely shredded lime peel  
½ cup lime juice  
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 teaspoons sugar  
2 cloves garlic, minced  
1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

**Method:**

Place chicken breast halves between two pieces of plastic wrap. Using the flat side of a meat mallet, lightly pound to an even ½ inch/1.27cm thickness. Place in a large resealable plastic/freezer bag set in a shallow dish.

For marinade, in a small bowl, stir together lime peel, lime juice, rosemary, oil, sugar and garlic. Pour over chicken. Seal bag; turn to coat chicken. Marinate in the refrigerator for 1 to 4 hours, turning bag occasionally.

Remove chicken from marinade, discarding marinade. Season chicken with pepper. For a charcoal grill, place chicken on the BBQ grill rack of an uncovered grill directly over medium coals. Grill uncovered for 10 to 12 minutes or until tender and no longer pink, turning once halfway through grilling. Or cook under the stovetop grill as above. Serve with greens and a sprig of rosemary.

**At Salt Skip News, we are always interested to hear from readers. Please send us your Salt Skip news, tips and salt-free or low sodium recipes... please email to Malcolm.Riley@csiro.au**

**BP Monitor with Salt Skip News** is published every 2 months, from February to December (6 issues a year). This newsletter is not a substitute for health and medical advice. Readers should always seek the advice of a qualified health professional regarding their health or a medical condition.

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