

## Norwegian Prawns to Spice Up Chinese Noodles

ScienceDaily (Oct. 11, 2011) — Bioprospecting is opening up international markets for Norwegian seafood companies. Essences extracted from a prawn or octopus off the west coast of Norway could end up as flavouring in noodle packages in China.

This type of bioprospecting involves investigating marine organisms to find components or compounds that have commercial use. The potential results are particularly promising in relation to foodstuffs as well as for applications in medicine and the energy industry.

In the initial phase, researchers will be investigating various species and raw materials, including species already common in fisheries, untapped resources such as woodlice, and by-products such as leftovers from processing in the fishing industry, to cater for Chinese preferences.

Essences extracted from a prawn or octopus off the west coast of Norway could end up as flavouring in noodle packages in China.

"In China they sell a total of 100 billion noodle packages each year. Two-hundred million of these contain a packet of seafood flavouring. This enormous market is our target," says Ola Ween of the Norwegian research company, Møreforskning AS.

Ween is heading a research project in cooperation with another company, Firmenich Bjørge Biomarin AS. Their goal is to identify molecules to use as a source of seafood flavourings they hope will catch on specifically in China. The process is a complicated one and begins with studying the Chinese palate.

### Marine bioprospecting with commercial promise

If the researchers succeed, they can add yet another success to the growing list of products resulting from marine bioprospecting. This type of bioprospecting involves investigating marine organisms to find components or compounds that have commercial use. The potential results are particularly promising in relation to foodstuffs as well as for applications in medicine and the energy industry.

The Chinese have different taste preferences from Europeans. Møreforskning AS's project receives funding under the National Programme for Research in Functional Genomics (FUGE), one of the Large-scale Programmes administered by the Research Council of Norway.

### What do the Chinese prefer?

"We know that the Chinese have different taste preferences from Europeans. Our first step is to identify the



*Bowl of Chinese noodles. (Credit: © charles taylor / Fotolia)*

appealing flavours which the Chinese associate with the sea. Subsequently, we will find raw materials off the Norwegian coast we can use to create similar flavours," Ween explains.

In the initial phase, researchers will be investigating various species and raw materials, including species already common in fisheries, untapped resources such as woodlice, and by-products such as leftovers from processing in the fishing industry. They hope to end up with 3-4 promising sources to research further after this phase has been completed.

### Just the right mix

Once the prospective ingredients for new flavours have been isolated, they will be analysed down to the tiniest molecule. This will enable the researchers to determine whether it will be at all feasible to extract what they have targeted. If so, these substances will then either be produced from raw materials or through artificial means.

The taste of a food is determined by its particular combination of amino acids, fats and other chemical components. The challenge is to find the perfect blend for Chinese noodles -- perhaps a tasty mix of substances from Norwegian prawns, cod and woodlice?

Recommend this story on **Facebook**, **Twitter**, and **Google +1**:

Like

10

0

Other bookmarking and sharing tools:

| [More](#)

---

### Story Source:

The above story is reprinted from [materials](#) provided by [Research Council of Norway, The](#). The original article was written by Elin Fugelsnes/Else Lie; translation by Glenn Wells/Carol B. Eckmann.

*Note: ScienceDaily reserves the right to edit materials for content and length. For further information, please contact the source cited above.*

---

Need to cite this story in your essay, paper, or report? Use one of the following formats:

● APA

○ MLA

Research Council of Norway, The (2011, October 11). Norwegian prawns to spice up Chinese noodles. *ScienceDaily*. Retrieved October 21, 2011, from <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2011/10/111011095859.htm>

*Note: If no author is given, the source is cited instead.*

**Disclaimer:** Views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect those of ScienceDaily or its staff.