

FIRST NATIONWIDE VEGAN FESTIVAL

Events are taking place all over the UK from 20 May until 10 June as part of the first Vegan Festival of Britain, coordinated by Animal Aid to celebrate its 40th anniversary.

You can expect food and lifestyle shows, cookery demos, restaurant promotions, vegan markets, a sponsored bike ride, an open day for a farmed animal rescue centre and an art exhibition. Talks and cookery demonstrations are being offered to every secondary school in the UK too, and there will even be a specially brewed festival ale.



Festival organiser Mark Gold says: 'Few will deny that veganism is the lifestyle of the moment, with opinion polls showing a massive increase in the number of people switching to plant-based nutrition. But as well as celebrating this surge in popularity, the Vegan Festival of Britain is also looking to continue the trend.'

● For a full list of events go to www.veganfestivalofbritain.org.uk.

HERBAL MAGIC



It's high season for fresh herbs and it's so easy to snip and season your cooking with these delicious ingredients. But the experts at the College of Naturopathic Medicine (CNM) say there are nutritional benefits to using fresh herbs too. 'Fresh, organic herbs are amazing for health, containing highly concentrated levels of vitamins and minerals,' says chef Olivier Sanchez, who teaches on the CNM Natural Chef Course.

To preserve their nutritional benefits, Olivier says it's best to add herbs at the end of cooking. 'Also, picking them fresh is ideal to benefit from the active ingredients contained in their essential



oils,' he explains. 'Fresh herbs will last about a week before the oils deteriorate, and dried herbs should be kept for no more than a year.'

Olivier suggests drying your own herbs to use in winter. 'I also love to preserve the flavour of fresh herbs by blending basil or coriander with garlic, seasoning and a little olive oil. I freeze this in ice-cube trays and defrost a cube as a salad dressing or let it melt over hot dishes.'

● Details of CNM courses can be found at www.naturopathy-uk.com.

Naked cereal

If you love to get on board with new food trends, you'll want to try naked barley, a neglected variety that is a rich source of complex carbohydrates and minerals. According to Hodmedods, which is reviving this ancient crop, it's called 'naked' because the grain falls naturally from the husks and is ready for milling or eating without polishing. This means you get to eat the whole grain.

Josiah Meldrum, co-founder of Hodmedods, says: 'It's often said that the best way to conserve rare varieties of crop plants is



to eat them and that's what we set out to do with naked barley.' The grain is more sustainable to grow than wheat and produces a malty cereal that can be used in porridge, muesli and granola, in crumble toppings, flapjacks, bread and cakes.

● Buy online at www.hodmedods.co.uk.



NEW IDENTITY FOR LEADING ANIMAL-FREE RESEARCH CHARITY

The UK's leading non-animal medical research charity, the Dr Hadwen Trust (DHT), is rebranding and will now be known as Animal Free Research UK.

After 40 years of supporting and providing grants to over 200 animal-free medical research projects, including cancer, Alzheimer's disease and diabetes, and committing to over £4.8 million worth of animal-free research projects across the UK at student, PhD and post-doctoral level in the last five years alone, the charity believes that a new name will help them attract even more supporters and communicate more clearly about the innovative work they do.

DHT made history by opening a vegan charity shop in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, in 2015 – which was a first for a national charity – and has now opened its second in Hove, East Sussex. The official opening was conducted by committed vegan Louis Michael from *Gogglebox* (pictured below). Louis says: 'It's a special thing when you can use your platform to promote real goodness.'

● www.animalfreeresearchuk.org.

