

June 2015. A New Zealand-Japanese science team starts to lay the foundation for developing blackcurrant solutions for dietary stress!

At our Conference in Lithuania in a few week's (Thursday June 11th, <http://lsdi.lt/conference/registration.php>) researchers Prof Mark Willems (UK) and Prof Roger Hurst (NZ) will show the results of their separate work regarding the values of specific blackcurrant formulations for physical stress. Other research has already been completed showing the potential for blackcurrants to help mitigate mental stress and improve mental acuity.

But human stress is a three-pronged issue: and the third and perhaps most threatening 'stress' (socially and for the individual) is 'dietary'. And on that 'battle-front', we have some truly wonderful news.

Prof Roger Hurst is part of a research collaboration between New Zealand and Japan which will investigate whether NZ blackcurrant-based foods can improve the 'management' of human carbohydrate metabolism. As a consequence this could combat the onset of diabetes, obesity, and cognitive decline associated with ageing.

The global importance of this research if successful cannot be underestimated. Diabetes is just one of the manifestations of metabolic syndrome and currently affects more than **371 million people** worldwide.

Over the last 5 years anecdotal evidence suggested that a New Zealand blackcurrant sport supplement could provide benefit for diabetics: taking the New Zealand-based Sujon blackcurrant supplement had significantly improved diabetes symptoms.

A New Zealand-government research Grant is allowing the collaboration between Plant & Food Research's Prof Roger Hurst and Associate Prof John Podd (School of Psychology, Massey University), and Japanese scientists Dr Hirohito Ishikawa (Research Fellow, Healthcare Systems Co., Ltd.), Prof Toshihiko Osawa (Dean, Dept. of Health & Nutrition, Aichi Gakuin University) and Prof Yoki Kato (Professor, School of Human Science & Environment, University of Hyogo).

The research will use Sujon New Zealand-grown blackcurrant formulations as a Sujon product had already been proven in pilot human clinical trials for related value in sport endurance and lactate stress. This new project also follows from a wealth of efficacy information and expertise that Plant & Food has created on the benefits of NZ-grown blackcurrants for managing oxidative stress and inflammation for improved recovery post exercise.

Blackcurrant-"the Stress Hero' is the slogan for our 2015 Conference: and the potential of the blackcurrants to alleviate the negative impacts of **the human stress trilogy**(sport/mental/dietary) is very good news for both the blackcurrant industry and global consumers looking for meaningful answers to today's lifestyle challenges.