

“Did You Know?”

Researchers at the **ARS Southern Regional Research Center** in New Orleans, LA, in collaboration with Red River Commodities, a major sunflower seed producer based in Fargo, ND, developed a process for making a **sunflower butter product** that resembles the flavor, texture and appearance of commercially available peanut butter. Red River Commodities came to ARS for their processing expertise. ARS scientific experts were able to solve a major obstacle in processing the product after discovering that improper roasting



results in poor texture, flavor and appearance. By modifying the roasting process, controlling moisture and ingredient effects, a significantly improved sunflower butter was produced. The beauty of this product is that it is an alternative to peanut butter for peanut allergy sufferers. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, approximately 2 percent of the population suffers from peanut allergies, with symptoms ranging from a mild case of hives to severe anaphylactic shock. So, this alternative is welcome news.

Red River Commodities created SunGold Foods, Inc. a company dedicated to commercializing the sunflower product, **SunButter®**. No company has ever successfully marketed a spreadable sunflower seed butter. The product is now available in a variety

of flavors (creamy, organic unsweetened, natural, natural crunch and natural omega-3) and sizes, including new “go packs” designed for lunches and on-the-go snacking. The product is being sold to some of the largest U.S. food companies and retailers, such as Kroger, SuperValu, Walmart, Target, Trader Joe’s and Whole Foods, and recently through the QVC network. Sunflower seeds are a good source of protein, fiber, vitamin E, zinc and iron. SunButter® is currently being used in a variety of foods as an added ingredient, including in chocolate and SunButter® candy cups, energy bars and a no-peanut peanut sauce. SunButter® is an entitlement item and is thus part of the food commodities list for the USDA National School Lunch Program. This technology will increase the value of U.S. sunflower seeds, boosting profitability for U.S. sunflower farmers.

Chicken Pasta with SunButter® Dressing

Ingredients

- 2 pkgs. Ramen noodles, any variety, do not use seasoning packet
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 cup Italian dressing
- 3/4 cup SunButter®

Directions

Make ramen noodles as directed on packet (without seasoning packet). Grill chicken breasts; cut into strips. Whisk Italian dressing into SunButter® gradually. Toss noodles and chicken with dressing before serving.

SunButter® information is available at:
www.sunbutter.com

Reprinted with permission from Red River Commodities.

Please submit story ideas and national award items to: Tara T. Weaver-Missick, tara.weavermisick@ars.usda.gov or call 301-504-1663.