

South Korean firm to develop healthier kimchi

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A South Korean firm said Wednesday it plans to develop a healthier, low-salt version of the country's signature dish kimchi in line with global trends.

Kimchi, a fiercely spiced mixture of pickled cabbage, radish and cucumbers, is prized for its healthy ingredients -- apart from the salt.

Daesang FNF said it would reduce the salinity rate to 1.6 grammes of salt for every 100 grammes of kimchi next year, compared to an average 2.0 grammes currently and 2.5 grammes over 20 years ago.

The government has been working to globalise Korean food including kimchi.

"In order for kimchi to appeal to foreigners as a [healthy food](#), it is necessary to lower the level of salt," said a spokeswoman for Daesang FNF.

"The amount of sodium will differ but the taste will be the same as the original flavour."

The Korea [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) has found that Koreans consume more than double the World Health Organisation's recommended daily intake of [salt](#), putting them at risk of ailments such as hypertension.

The Korea [Food and Drug Administration](#) is working to cut the sodium rate in food but kimchi is not a priority.

"Although kimchi can be salty, it is not considered unhealthy," an administration official told AFP. "The salty flavor is important, although it shouldn't be too much."

The side dish has its own museum in Seoul and an annual festival, and was even blasted into space with the country's first astronaut in 2008.

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