

Can we make people think broccoli tastes like chocolate?

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broccoli

A new science called neurogastronomy explores brain and behavior in the context of food, and the International Society of Neurogastronomy's inaugural symposium will bring together for the first time the "four pillars" of neurogastronomy to share their knowledge and begin a dialogue that they hope will ultimately lead to real changes in brain behavior as it relates to food.

University of Kentucky Neuropsychologist Dan Han and his ISN co-founders have structured the day to be very different than the typical scientific symposium. Instead of long lectures, there are several presentations in a TED-talk style format. Among the speakers:

- Chefs: Next Iron Chef Runner-up Jehangir Mehta; James Beard

finalist and *Mind of a Chef* host Ed Lee; Leah Sarris, program director for the Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine at Tulane University; and Fred Morin of Joe Beef Montreal.

- Scientists: Physiologist Tim McClintock; prize-winning experimental psychologist Charles Spence; and Dr. Gordon Shepherd, who coined the term neurogastronomy — first in 2006 in an article in *Nature* and six years later in an eponymous book.

The symposium will be a true culinary experience as well, with tasting breaks to help participants grasp the fundamentals of flavor perception (sweet, salty, umami, etc.) and chef-quality breakfast and lunch breaks.

Han is anxious to begin the dialogue that might ultimately provide tangible improvement to quality of life for people with neurologically-related taste impairments. "When the concept of neurogastronomy was introduced, people realized it was a need that had been there for a long time - ever since mammals started eating," Han said. "If we could get together and simply provide ways to help these patients enjoy a meal, break bread with family and friends and enjoy that process again, then I would be very proud of that contribution to clinical sciences."

Provided by University of Kentucky

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