



**For Immediate Release**

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**Peanuts Contain Significant Amount of Plant Compound  
that May Prevent Risk of Heart Disease and Cancer**

*Albany, GA, March, 2000* -- New research conducted by a team of scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) shows that peanuts are another rich source of heart-healthy resveratrol. Recent studies on this plant compound show that it may help reduce the risks of heart disease and cancer. Resveratrol is also plentiful in red wine and grapes.

Research conducted by a team of scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) shows that peanuts are another food source of heart-healthy resveratrol. Recent studies on this plant compound show that it may help reduce the risks of heart disease and cancer. Resveratrol is also plentiful in red wine and grapes.

The research conducted by Dr. Tim Sanders from the USDA Agricultural Research Service in North Carolina, and his colleague Dr. Robert W. McMichael, Jr., found that peanuts have a significant amount of resveratrol in both the kernel and skin. The researchers analyzed three market types of peanuts that had been cold stored for up to three years and found 0.02 to 1.79 mcg/g resveratrol in the peanuts (without skins), which is approximately 0.6 to 50 mcg/ounce of peanuts. In comparison, red wine contains 0.6 to 8.0 mcg/mL depending on the wine, which is approximately 72 to 960 mcg/fluid ounce.

Resveratrol belongs to a class of compounds called phytoalexins. Its presence in red wine has been associated with a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease and it has been credited for the "French Paradox" (despite a high-fat diet, the French have a surprisingly low rate of heart disease). More recently, a study using resveratrol extracted from grapes showed a reduced risk of cancer in animals.

It is not yet known exactly how resveratrol functions as a healthful factor in food. Some research has shown that resveratrol can inhibit the build-up of platelets in blood vessels. It is also a potent antioxidant, which can reduce the oxidation of LDL (bad) cholesterol.

This new USDA research supports recent epidemiological studies that show nuts can reduce the risk of heart disease by more than half when eaten frequently in small amounts. There may be several factors in peanuts that contribute to this healthful effect. Peanuts are an excellent food source of vitamin E. They also provide approximately two grams of fiber per ounce, and have relatively high amounts of folic acid, thiamin, niacin, copper, manganese, phosphorus, magnesium, and zinc. They are high in plant protein and contain primarily monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fat.

The Peanut Institute is a non-profit organization that supports nutrition research and develops educational programs to encourage healthful lifestyles. Learn more about peanuts and health at [www.peanut-institute.org](http://www.peanut-institute.org)

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