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# well-being at work

The Eden Springs newsletter for the promotion of healthy habits at work

Issue 9 · March 2008

## Eden supports World Water Day

The United Nations has designated March 20th 2008 as World Water Day, in order to draw attention to the multiple issues the world faces in dealing with its water resources. The UN hopes the occasion will remind everyone that water and health are inter-twined, and that it is important to address the increasing need for adequate and safe water to protect both people and the planet.

Most of us in Europe tend to take water for granted; it's always there when we need

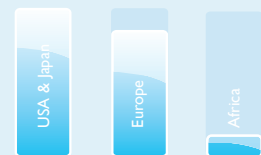
it, whether from the tap, a bottle or a cooler. But not everyone is so lucky. The UN estimates that 1.2 billion people around the world do not have sufficient access to safe drinking water, with catastrophic consequences for health. Eden applauds the UN's efforts to focus attention on this critical issue, and is proud to support a water project with UNICEF. Through our partnership we can make a real difference in the lives of one community in Somalia, a country that has



### Did you know...

#### The average daily per capita consumption of water

- in north America and Japan is 300 liters
- in Europe is 200 liters
- in Africa is 10-20 liters



source: World Water Council

been particularly affected by water shortages in the past decade.

The Eden-UNICEF project is in the town of Gardo, Somalia, which has a population of approximately 30,000 people. The population varies in seasons and in years due to the influx of families coming from drought affected communities in the rural areas. It is estimated that as many as 1,000 destitute families live in the

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## The Health Benefits of Green Tea



### FROM THE EXPERT

Dr. Nathalie Jacquelin-Ravel  
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Tea is, after water, the most popular beverage in the world; every second more than 15,000 cups of tea are consumed around the planet. However, not all teas are created equal. You have probably heard that green tea in particular

is "good for you", but what exactly does that mean?

Although black, green and oolong teas all come from the *Camellia sinensis* plant the chemical composition of these teas is completely different. It is green tea that has been shown to have more than 100 different molecules that give it distinctive health benefits.

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town's outskirts in slum settlements. These families depend on the assistance of the international and local humanitarian agencies to provide them with their daily water requirements, as much as 10,000 liters per day.

In cooperation with the local agency for water and natural resources, UNICEF and

*A drop in the bucket, to be sure;  
but a step in the right direction!*

Eden are helping Gardo improve its water infrastructure to meet the needs of the town

and the surrounding communities. The goal is to provide a clean, potable, sustainable water supply for all citizens.

The key elements involved in this project are: the construction of a water pipe network of more than 15 km; purchasing generators for new and existing boreholes, the construction of elevated water storage tanks near the boreholes; and building water kiosks for public access. In addition, the project will provide training to local technical and administrative staff in order to improve their skills to better manage their water resources in the long-term.

Eden has committed to providing 100,000€ over the next 2 years to fund this project. A drop in the bucket, perhaps, but a step in the right direction! This project falls within the framework of a collaboration program on development projects between the European Union and UNICEF. The EU will therefore triple Eden's contribution, and help us make an even greater impact where it is desperately needed.



## The expert's view on green tea

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The Chinese have known about the medicinal benefits of green tea since ancient times, using it to treat everything from headaches to depression.

Today, scientific research is providing hard evidence for the health benefits that have long been associated with it, including fighting against cancer and cardiovascular disease.

The secret of green tea lies in the fact that it is rich in catechin polyphenols, particularly one referred to as EGCG<sup>1</sup>, which is a powerful form of anti-oxidant. Why don't other teas have the same health-giving properties as green tea? What sets green tea apart is the

**"Better to be deprived of food  
for 3 days, than tea for one"**

**Ancient Chinese Proverb**



way it is processed. Green tea leaves are steamed, which prevents the EGCG compound from being oxidized. By contrast, black and oolong teas are made from fermented leaves, which results in the EGCG being converted into other compounds that are not nearly as effective in preventing and fighting various diseases.

But getting the most out of your green tea is not as easy as it may seem. There is currently some debate over how long to brew the tea in order to derive the maximum health benefits. Studies show that a brew time of less than 5 minutes only extracts 20% of the catechin polyphenols. But brew it too long and those same elements that provide the health benefits can ruin the flavour, making the tea taste 'grassy'. Experts recommend 8-10 minutes to achieve a good balance between benefits and taste.

The question remains, how much green tea should one drink? Research has yet to determine if drinking more offers greater health benefits. Keep in mind that green tea does contain caffeine (albeit less than coffee) and too much could provoke insomnia. Research has also yet to prove the claims that green tea can help arthritis or improve high cholesterol levels.

<sup>1</sup>"Epigallocatechin gallate"



### Well-being at Work

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Design & production: [www.redcomunicacion.es](http://www.redcomunicacion.es)

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