

March 3, 2010

Media Statement

WA SCIENCE HELPS UNVEIL CHINESE MEDICINE

West Australian scientists are set to link with researchers in Shanghai to help unveil the mystery of traditional Chinese medicine.

On a recent trip to China, Professor Grant Morahan from the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research (WAIMR) received an honorary professorship at The Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine for his contribution to science and anticipated collaboration between the two research groups.

Professor Morahan said the collaboration would see Shanghai University scientists utilise the models and methods created by his team which were now being used to test the health benefits of lupin kernels.

“Our research as part of the WAIMR-based Centre for Food and Genomic Medicine (CFGM), tests how a lupin-supplemented diet can help control weight, cholesterol, and insulin sensitivity to reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes,” he said.

“The methods we have used to investigate this will be shared with our international colleagues who will use them to better understand the workings of traditional Chinese medicine compounds.

“The Shanghai researchers will isolate active compounds in traditional Chinese medicine and we will test them in our systems to see if these remedies may offer benefits, as well as investigating how genetics may affect the outcome.”

Collaboration between the groups also hopes to offer new research leads into treatments for diabetes and its complications.

“We will also test the active compounds in traditional Chinese medicine identified by the Shanghai scientists for their potential in treating diabetes or diabetes complications,” Professor Morahan said.

“Joining with these researchers will help to fast-track both of our groups’ work and opens up new scope to investigate improved treatments for diabetes.”

WAIMR Director Professor Peter Klinken said he was proud of Professor Morahan’s accolade and looked forward to following the collaborative project.

“Collaborations like this are extremely valuable to medical research and help teams get results more quickly and efficiently, so this honour is a very significant one for Professor Morahan and WAIMR,” he said.

“Thanks to the work of Professor Morahan and others like him, WA is being recognised internationally as a valuable scientific resource.”

Among research at the CFGM aimed at tackling ‘diabesity’ – the twin epidemics of diabetes and obesity – are investigations into Australian sweet lupins.

Lupin is a grain legume high in protein and dietary fibre, as well as being low in fat and GI (Glycemic Index) value.

-ENDS-

MEDIA CONTACT: Sarah Hayward, WAIMR Media Consultant
O: 9381 8237 M: 0401 141 483 E: sarah@capturemedia.com.au