

# Spice it up



ROBIN ZIELINSKI/SUN-NEWS PHOTOS

CHILES CAN DELIVER A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTH BENEFITS, according to New Mexico State University Regents Professor of Horticulture Paul Bosland, right, director of NMSU's Chile Pepper Institute, and his colleague, Danise Coon.

## Chile offers some surprising health benefits

By S. Darrickson Moore  
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**LASCROCUS** — What miracle food can both whet and curb your appetite, deliver mega vitamins, cheer you up, ease aches and pains, clear your sinuses, rev up your metabolism and lots more?

If you know the official New Mexico state vegetable and the answer to our official state question ("red or green?") you can also identify our milagro cure-all: the chile pepper!

Chiles can deliver a wide range of health benefits, according to New Mexico State University Regents Professor of Horticulture Paul Bosland, director of NMSU's Chile Pepper Institute, and his colleague, Danise Coon.

He and Coon have investigated scientific journals, compiled research at NMSU and created a poster, "How Chile Peppers Help Your Body."

The poster includes everything from nutritional benefits to cutting-edge medical research.

"We're trying to educate the public that chile has multiple benefits and there's more to them than just bite or heat," Bosland said.

"One red chile pepper a day provides all the vitamin A you need and one green chile pepper has more vita-

### Chile info

#### The Chile Pepper Institute

► NMSU's nonprofit Chile Pepper Institute Center for Chile Education, Gerald Thomas Hall, room 265, corner of College and Knox streets, 646-3028, [www.chilepepperinstitute.org](http://www.chilepepperinstitute.org)

► Hours: 8 a.m. to noon, and 1 to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

► The institute offers information, seeds, posters, books, CDs, guides, research articles, chile plants, packaged chile food products, chile-themed clothing, flash drives and other merchandise.

NMSU/Doña Ana Cooperative Extension Office,

► 530 N. Church St., (575) 525-6649, [donaanaextension.nmsu.edu](mailto:donaanaextension.nmsu.edu)

► Hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday

► Free information includes pamphlets on making ristras, chile recipes, chile cultivation and preservation.

min C than six oranges. The most surprising thing for me was realizing how many products use chile," he said.



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Capsaicin, the active component in chiles, is used in creams for arthritis, and in patches and creams to relieve sore and aching muscles.

"There's no patent on capsaicin, so there's no royalty incentive to market them," he said.

"One of the most interesting studies, from UCLA Medical School, indicates that capsaicin kills prostate cancer cells," he said.

While the poster notes that "some information has not been scientifically tested," chile also reportedly aids in motion- and seasickness, treatment of ulcers and "helps 'draw' the poison out and reduce swelling of fresh insect stings and bites."

Research has established that chiles "can help lower cholesterol and help

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