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News Release

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Research Suggests Fresh Grapes are a Superfood

Fresno, CA – A new article appearing in the current issue of the peer-reviewed *Journal of Agriculture and Food Chemistry* explores the concept of “superfoods” and makes a case that fresh grapes have earned what should be a prominent position in the superfood family.¹ The author, leading resveratrol and cancer researcher John M. Pezzuto, Ph.D., D.Sc., Dean of the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Western New England University, brings forth an array of evidence to support his perspective on this issue.

As noted in the article, the term “superfood” is a common word without an official definition or established criteria. Mainstream superfoods are typically part of the Mediterranean Diet and generally rich in natural plant compounds that are beneficial to a person’s health. Pezzuto addresses the broader topic of superfoods in detail, then makes the scientific case for grapes, noting that fresh grapes are underplayed in this arena and often not included with mention of other similar foods, such as berries.

Grapes are a natural source of over 1,600 compounds, including antioxidants and other polyphenols such as flavonoids, anthocyanidins, catechins, phenolic acids, resveratrol, and more. Polyphenols are credited with the health benefits of grapes, via antioxidant activity and influencing cellular processes. It is the whole grape and the unique matrix of these compounds within it that creates the biological effects, not a single component.

Over sixty peer-reviewed studies have been published in the scientific literature on grapes and health. The role of grapes on cardiovascular health is well established, including promoting relaxation of blood vessels and healthy circulation, as well as modulating cholesterol levels. Clinical trials also show that grapes support brain health (help maintain healthy brain metabolism and beneficial impacts on cognition), skin health (enhanced resistance to UV radiation and DNA damage in skin cells), gut health (modulating the gut microbiome and increasing diversity in the gut), and eye health (retinal impact via increase in macular pigment optical density). Finally, in the realm of nutrigenomics – the study of foods on gene expression in the body – grape consumption has been shown to positively alter gene expression in relevant

¹ Pezzuto, John M. (2025). Perspective: Are Grapes Worthy of the Moniker Superfood? *J. Agric. Food Chem.* Doi: [10.1021/acs.jafc.5c05738](https://doi.org/10.1021/acs.jafc.5c05738)

body systems. Pezzuto suggests that it is these activities at the genetic level that are likely the driving force behind the health benefits of grapes.

“Dr. Pezzuto shows that based on the science, grapes are indeed a superfood, and should be recognized as such,” said Ian LeMay, president of the California Table Grape Commission, “and we are hopeful that using this nomenclature in association with grapes becomes common practice. Luckily, whether consumed for health or sheer enjoyment as a healthy snack, eating California grapes is a win for consumers.”

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