

SUPERTASTERS

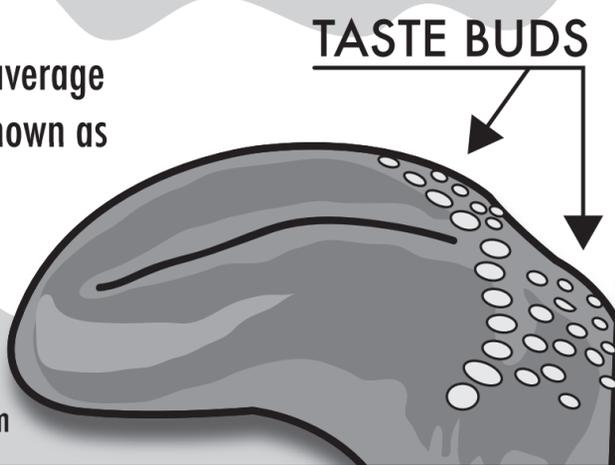
 Taste buds are located on small bumps on the tongue called fungiform papillae

 Each taste bud is made up of about 50 to 150 taste receptor cells

 Each receptor is best at sensing a single flavor: sweet, salty, bitter, sour or umami

 People with a higher than average number of tastebuds are known as supertasters

according to www.scientificamerican.com



Supertaster has heightened sense

Truman State freshman's taste buds affect taste and influence food combinations

BY ANNA GRACE
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Freshman George Dimitriou might make some unconventional choices for food combinations, but he has extra taste buds to back up his food choices.

Dimitriou said he is a supertaster. Supertasters are people with more taste buds than others, according to scientificamerican.com.

Dimitriou said he discovered he was a supertaster during early high school. He said he began to wonder why he disliked foods other people liked, such as grapefruits and tonic water. After some research, he said he discovered there are different types of tasters among people.

Green vegetables, grapefruit juice and tonic water are some of the food items supertasters find particularly offensive, Dimitriou said.

"Things that taste sweeter or more savory are always a little more intense," Dimitriou said.

He said growing up, he didn't like green vegetables, which made him seem like he was a picky eater.

He said there is a saying to explain the relationship between picky eaters and supertasters — "A lot of supertasters are picky eaters, but not all picky eaters are supertasters."

Dimitriou said supertasters are more common than some people realize. Although numbers vary across populations, 25 to 30 percent of people are supertasters, 40 to 50 percent are average tasters and 25 to 30 percent are non-tasters, or people who find most food bland, according to scientificamerican.com.

Dimitriou said people can take an at-home test to determine if they are supertasters. He said it consists of putting blue dye on your tongue and then asking someone to count the number of taste buds with a magnifying glass.

If more than 30 fungiform papillae, which are where the taste buds occur, are counted in the area of a paper hole reinforcer, a person is considered a supertaster, according to scientificamerican.com.

Supertasting has made Dimitriou more aware of taste differences, he said. With a hamburger, he said he easily can tell the difference between the condi-

ments and toppings. He said he tastes onion sharply and tomato tastes smooth.

Dimitriou said he likes to mix his food more than average people, and has promised his friends to never lead them astray with his food mixing. He said one of his most successful mixes so far is mashed potatoes, chili and chicken. He said he loves how mac and cheese mixes with other dishes.

Sophomore Kevin Tucker, Dimitriou's friend, said he found out Dimitriou was a supertaster when they lived together during their freshman year and were learning about each other.

He said Dimitriou likes the chicken bowl available at campus dining halls, but he likes it with mac and cheese and chipotle sauce.

Tucker said Dimitriou has his friends try his mixtures, but does not force his food choices on them. Tucker said Dimitriou gets annoyed when someone eats all their foods individually — like if someone has a hamburger and fries and finishes the hamburger before starting on their fries — since he has to have all his food mixed.

The mixing is for a reason, Dimitriou said. "I get this whole massive taste at once," Dimitriou said. "It kinda makes my taste buds go crazy."

Business builds skills

Networking service allows college students to act as mentors and run businesses

BY EMILY BATTMER
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Senior Ben Salmon already is running his own business, networking with entrepreneurs throughout the country and offering advice to up-and-coming businesspeople.

Salmon runs an online sales and marketing operation through the Amway Corporation, and said he has built his own team of fellow entrepreneurs through a networking and mentoring service called Leadership Team Development, or LTD. LTD works with Amway as a partner to teach people how to make money and be successful running businesses, Salmon said.

"It teaches success principles and different leadership principles and relationship building — what I would call life skills — that apply to growing a business," Salmon said.

Salmon said he became involved about a year ago, when another college student from the University of Missouri-Columbia contacted him about the opportunity. He attended an informational meeting and said he liked the business plan and wanted to get involved. He said he was excited about the opportunity to make extra money working flexible hours.

Since then, Salmon has created his own 20-person business team, consisting almost entirely of college students from Truman State and other Missouri universities.

Salmon Business Group, as his business is called, is an online sales and marketing venture featuring "everyday products for everyday people," ranging from vitamins to skincare to laundry detergent, Salmon said. He markets the products and is paid based on how much of the product he sells. He said he can purchase the items himself for a discounted price or sell them to customers for business or personal use.

"It's kind of whatever you make it," Salmon said. "Some use it for discounted products, some people use it to make a couple extra hundred dollars and some might make it their career."

Salmon said he's not sure whether his business will be his career, but said he has been successful with it so far and has learned a lot. As a business finance major, he said he is excited to see where his experience will take him throughout the future.

In addition to monetary success, Salmon said he has gained several professional skills, including how to work with people of different personality types, be an encouraging and uplifting leader and manage his time wisely.

Sophomore Paula Toalson said she became involved with Amway and LTD a few months ago, when Salmon introduced her to the business plan.

She said she already has been fairly successful with the endeavor and has helped expand the team and sell products.

"Ultimately, it's up to you how much you work into it," Toalson said. "How much time and effort you put into it is what you get out of it. It's not a clock in and out kind of job."

Selling to five to 10 customers during a month would easily generate \$200 of revenue, Toalson said, so it is decent money for college students.

As an exercise science major, Toalson said her involvement might not pertain to her future career, but she has gained other useful skills, including how to take advice from leaders and how to be a leader herself.

"Each one of us is in business for ourselves but we're not by ourselves because we've got LTD," she said. "It gives you that team environment."

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