



School Children In Wales To Be Served Bugs For Lunch

Description

Scientists are hoping to replace some current lunch time favorites with a new kind of ‘tasty grub’.

Children, between the ages of 5 and 11, at four primary schools in Wales are set to take part in a study organised by scientists and teachers to teach them about the benefits of eating ‘alternative protein’ like bugs.

The climate change brainwashing experiment is an attempt by researchers to encourage families to stop eating meat and switch to eco-friendly substitutes like house crickets and mealworms .

The scientists say that ceratin bugs such as black soldier fly larvae, mealworms, crickets and locusts offer a more sustainable alternative to traditional proteins found in meat and soy.

The [Mail Online](#) reports: The project, led by academics from Cardiff University and the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol), will also involve surveying the primary school children to find out their attitudes to environmental issues and how they translate into views on the food they eat.

From this they wish to find the best way of educating the younger generation and their families on the environmental and nutritional benefits of edible insects, and in turn cut global meat consumption.

The project, which started last week, uses surveys, workshops, interviews and focus groups to explore young people’s understandings and experiences of alternative proteins.

As part of the research, they hope to offer food products containing crickets and mealworms to try.

This includes a product called VEXo, which combines insect- and plant-based proteins and is designed to look like ‘conventional’ mince, which will be prepared in the style of a bolognese.

The children will also be tasting a range of plant-based products that are already widely available on

UK supermarket shelves – such as pea-based and soya-based meat alternatives.

All products offered will have received Novel Foods approval by the Food Standards Agency, and parents will have to give consent for their children to take part.

‘Young people’s voices are becoming increasingly prominent in discussions on environmental futures and animal welfare,’ said Dr Chrisopher Bear from Cardiff University’s School of Geography and Planning.

‘Embodied in Greta Thunberg’s Fridays for Future movement, their highlighting of intensive livestock farming’s greenhouse gas emissions has been especially high-profile.

‘But there is still little research on how these values translate into food consumption attitudes and practices among children.

‘This research project is an opportunity for us to find out how young people of primary age envisage the role of edible insects and plant-based proteins in more sustainable and ethical food futures.’

by Niamh Harris

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