**Reduction of Sodium Content in Spicy Soups using Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)**

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**Responses to Reviewers Comments**

**Comments to the Authors:**

Recently some adverse effects have been documented from the use of MSG. Some of them should be reported in the discussion mentioning clearly that the dose used in this study is nontoxic.

**Response:**

The reported adverse effects of using MSG and the explanation of safety of the MSG dose used in present study have been stated as follows (Page 13-14, line 275-296):

It should be noted that in recent years, there have been some reports on possible adverse effects of MSG to some individuals who are sensitive to MSG. During early years, MSG was believed to be the cause of Chinese restaurant syndrome which is characterized by headache, flushing, numbness, muscle tightness, generalized weakness and broncho-constriction in asthmatics (32, 33). However, since the first report of this syndrome 50 years ago, clinical trials and resent studies have failed to identify a consistent relationship between the consumption of MSG and the constellation of symptoms that comprise the syndrome (34, 35, 36). Although there are reports that linked the consumption of glutamate to obesity, metabolic syndrome and neurotoxic effects (37, 38), there have been no consistent data to support this relationship. The general consensus among scientists has been that glutamate is safe even in children, pregnant women and lactating mothers (39, 32).

Besides, these adverse event reports triggered the official scientific organizations to examine the safety of MSG. Two major evaluations of the safety of MSG have been undertaken in recent history. The Joint FAO/WHO Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) undertook an evaluation of MSG in 1987, and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) undertook a review in 1995. The scientific reports identified some short-term, transient, and generally mild symptoms, as mentioned above may occur in some sensitive individuals who consume 3 grams or more of MSG without food. In addition, they concluded there may be a small number of unstable asthmatics who respond to doses of 1.5-2.5g of MSG in the absence of food (40, 41). In this regard, the dose of MSG (0.7%) used in this study is safe to be applied on the preparation of spicy soups, as the amount of MSG is considerably small and it would be consumed in the presence of foods/soups.