Cilantro as a Cheap, Effective Water Filter

September 18, 2013

A team of undergraduate researchers from the United States and Mexico has discovered that cilantro, a common herb used often in Latino food, can be used to filter drinking water against lead and other heavy metals, Time.com reports. Students from Ivy Tech Community College in Lafayette, Indiana, and their colleagues from the Universidad Politécnica de Francisco I. Madero in Hidalgo, Mexico, presented their findings at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society. The scientists were hoping to identify cheaper, more sustainable ways to filter polluted water in the Tule Valley region near Mexico City. After testing various plants and flowers, the team found that cilantro was both the most prevalent and most powerful bioabsorbant material in the area. They found that just a handful of the herb could nearly cleanse all the lead out of a pitcher full of contaminated water. Researchers suggest that cilantro might replace the expensive charcoal that is currently used in water filters, and they're testing how well the herb filters out other heavy metals.

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