

**POTATOES
SMASHED BY
CARB MYTHS**



SPUD FEST: Andrew Taylor lived on potatoes for a year, losing 50kg in the process, and says he still eats "a hell of a lot" of the vegetable.

BELINDA WILLIS

POTATOES are getting a raw deal as consumers unfairly drop them from their shopping lists over fears they are loading up on carbs, according to the latest Adelaide University research.

Social media sensation and Melbourne teacher Andrew Taylor was at a national horticulture conference event in Adelaide this week to support the survey results, saying he ate only potatoes for a year and dropped 50kg.

He said stories about potatoes being too high in carbohydrates were not backed by science and his experiment "reset my relationship with food".

"Food became fuel, potatoes gave me everything I needed and allowed me to become healthy," Mr Taylor told a Potatoes SA gathering.

Adelaide University's Food-Plus research centre data found Australia reflected a worldwide trend where consumers were buying less spuds. Survey results showed 30.3

per cent of Australians surveyed claimed they were avoiding the vegetable because it was high in carbohydrates "which are bad for me".

Joint author of the paper Katie Wood said the nationwide survey, of 1208 Australians aged between 25 to 54 years, was designed to understand why Australians were eating less potatoes and found it came down to one key factor.

"It was actually carbohydrates, they don't understand they can lose weight eating potatoes in a healthy diet, they

put them into being more of a bread and cereal rather than a vegetable," she said.

Joint paper contributor Dr John Carragher said work was already under way to advance the research, and "the idea that they are unhealthy, we need to fix that".

Mr Taylor is part of the new strategy.

He started eating 5kg of South Australian potatoes each day on January 1 last year.

At the time he weighed 151.7kg, was depressed and wanted to tackle emotional

food addictions. The idea was to eat only one bland but nutritional food to stop cravings.

Mr Taylor dropped 20kg in two months with his cholesterol and blood pressure falling, and regular doctor check showing he only needed a vitamin B12 supplement.

Now the experiment is over Mr Taylor chooses to "still eat a hell of a lot of potatoes, at least two-thirds of what I eat are potatoes".

And his favourite potato dish - "it's a good old fashioned mash".