

## BITE

# Chia cereal a new fave

One of the most exciting and unusual cereals I've had in years is a tantalizing mix of chia seeds, shelled hemp seeds, buckwheat, dehydrated apples, almonds, raisins, cinnamon, salt and sugar.

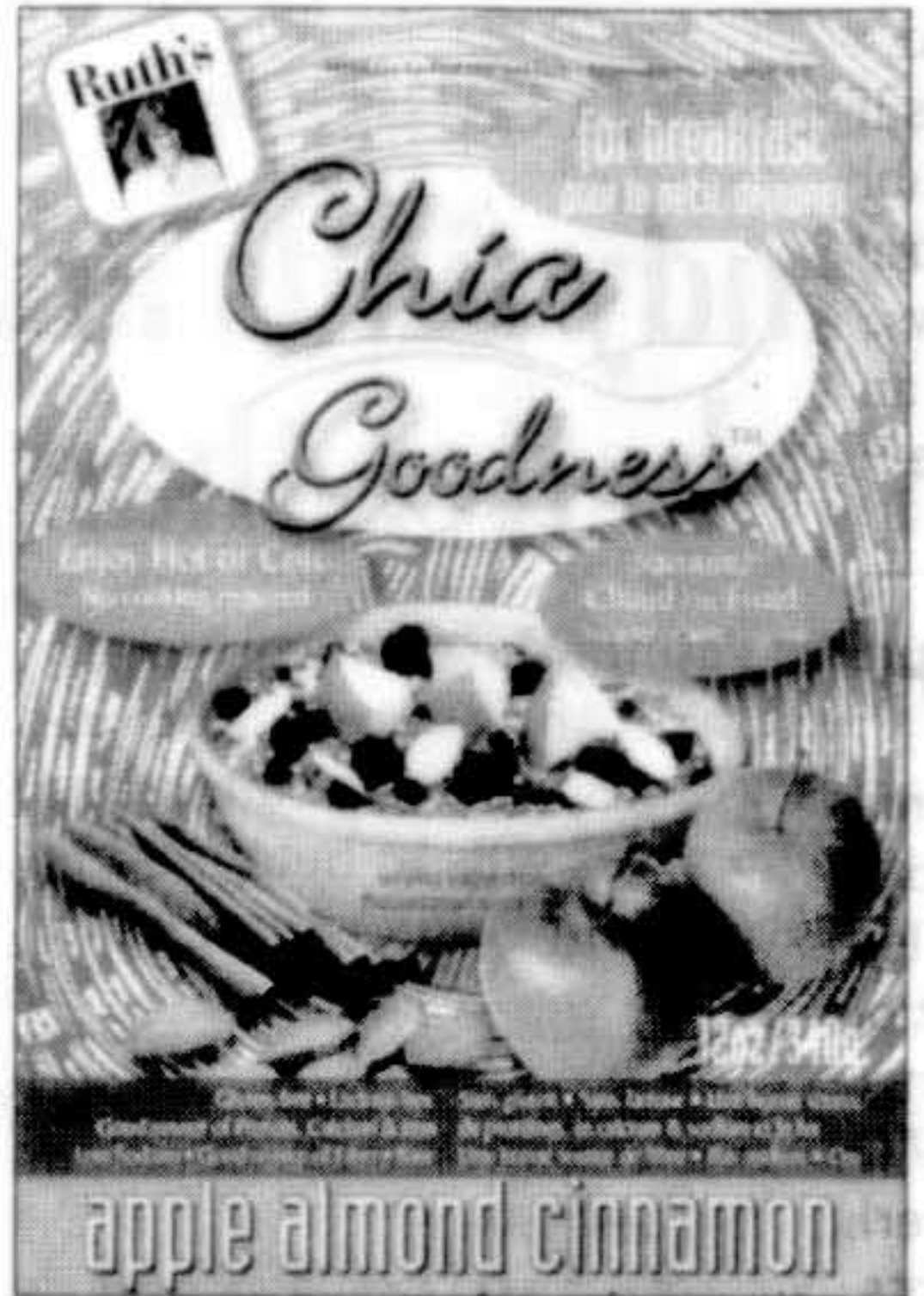
Chia Goodness is the creation of Ruth's Hemp Foods of Toronto.

Chia is an ancient grain (black, white or speckled) grown in Mexico, Central and South America. It's marketed under the names *salvia hispanica* L., *salba* or *chia*.

Ruth's Hemp Foods says chia has more omega-3 fatty acids than flax and more calcium than milk. It's gluten-free, lactose-free, low glycemic and full of fibre.

For this cereal, you combine 2 tablespoons cereal with 1/4 cup hot or cold liquid and wait 3 to 5 minutes for it to plump up. I tried the apple almond cinnamon flavour four ways with hot/cold water and hot/cold milk. Hot skim milk was my favourite, but I enjoyed all versions (and even can't resist snacking on a spoonful of raw cereal).

An original flavour (the most seeds and no sugar) was made for raw foodists and demands to be dressed up with fruit. Cranberry ginger is good. The cereals sell for \$7.50 from [ruthshempfoods.com](http://ruthshempfoods.com) and are starting to arrive in health food stores and supermarkets.



Naturally, everyone wants to know whether this cereal/seed is related to the kitschy Chia Pets that are grown by applying moistened chia seeds to porous clay figurines and watering them until they sprout.

It is. But Chia Pet creator, San Francisco-based Joseph Enterprises, hasn't sought FDA approval for its chia family, and can't promote them as a food product.

However the chia we're raving about is grown for human consumption.

Jennifer Bain