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Singapore researchers develop natural food stabiliser

24 January 2019 | News

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The durian, a thorny fruit known for its unique taste and smell, is popularly dubbed the King of Fruits in Southeast Asia.

Its seeds (about 3-4 cm in diameter) are normally thrown away after the flesh is consumed, but using a patented technique to harvest the thick gum from the seeds, an NTU team has shown that it could be used as a natural food stabiliser.

The findings are the culmination of a three-year research project led by Professor William Chen, Director of NTU's Food Science and Technology programme, who is now in talks with several interested companies to license and commercialise the research findings.

Potential applications include use in probiotic beverages and as natural food stabilisers. As the food stabiliser from durians are plant-based, they are also suitable for vegetarians and those who avoid animal-based food stabilisers such as gelatine.