Article for JBA website:

Japanese research was the impetus for the use of a New Zealand-grown blackcurrant extract by one of the world's most exciting female Marathon-runners as she competed in the 2015 North Pole Marathon.

Japanese research in the early 2000's proved that New Zealand blackcurrants could improve blood flow in the extremities for people in cold weather conditions. That early research was one of the reasons why Scotland's marathon super-athlete Audrey McIntosh (aged 51) used a New Zealand-grown blackcurrant supplement for her North Pole Marathon endeavour. Audrey finished 4th in the Women's Division and 12th Overall.

The North Pole marathon is held in temperatures as low as -40C. Audrey and the other competitors were accompanied by armed marksmen to protect them from polar bears and highly trained medical personnel because of the hypothermic environment.

Completing the North Pole Marathon meant Audrey achieved a unique Polar Odyssey. She had already completed the Antarctic Ice Marathon and the 100km Ultra Marathon.

But the blackcurrant supplement not only helped Audrey perform in below freezing conditions but also assisted in faster recovery and reduced muscle soreness. This benefit was crucial as Audrey competed in the Glasgow 53-mile Ultra Marathon and the Hoka Highland Fling just two weeks after the North Pole Marathon.

Champion super athlete Audrey McIntosh is one of a growing global group of super-athletes who use blackcurrant extract because of its unique values for endurance recovery. The same values also have relevance to non-athletes for ordinary living and the stresses it creates.

The Japan Blackcurrant Association website includes research by Professor Mark Willems of Chichester University UK. Along with the earlier Japanese research, Prof Willems research with New Zealand-grown blackcurrants for muscle stress-recovery formed the basis for use of the CurraNZ supplement by Audrey McIntosh.

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