

Where do we stand on... *Aquafaba*

Whipping up a tin of chickpeas into a batch of tasty hummus is a money-saving trick that every student cook learns. But what about whisking the liquid that tinned chickpeas are stored in? It sounds rather disgusting. A well-kept secret of vegans, this liquid is called aquafaba and is about to enter mainstream cooking as a cheap ingredient with magical properties.

Aquafaba – Latin for “bean water” – is literally the water that chickpeas and canned beans are cooked in. It has the same properties as egg white and can be whisked to make meringues, mixed with oil to make

mayonnaise or butter, and folded with cocoa powder for vegan takes on tasty desserts.

Around three tablespoons of aquafaba equates to one egg, meaning that one tin of chickpeas can provide

three to four eggs' worth of gooey translucent liquid.

It has been nearly four years since French chef Joel Roessel and vegan cook Goose Wohlt separately discovered aquafaba's likeness to

egg white. For a while, the liquid remained a secret among meat-deniers, but 2018 is the year that that will change.

Carnivores and vegetarians could soon turn to aquafaba as a cheaper, less wasteful and more sanitary version of egg white.

The weird-smelling liquid does have some drawbacks. Although it has the properties of egg white (it can bind, emulsify, foam and thicken), it has

less protein than its poultry-based cousin. And the final products can sometimes have a lingering air of chickpea jus.

But this hasn't stopped upstart cooks from experimenting with the newfound ingredient. One London start-up, Rubies in the Rubble, has just launched a chipotle mayo made with aquafaba that is on sale for £3.50.

Open a can of aquafaba and get a side dish of hummus in the process, or crack an egg and try to separate it while keeping errant bits of shell out of the mix?

It seems like an obvious choice, when you put it like that.

