Supercomputer starts churning out recipes

WASHINGTON, USA: Putting a chef's hat on its Watson supercomputer, IBM and the magazine Bon Appetit unveiled a new initiative that seeks to use Big Data for gastronomy.

IMB's Mke Rhodin says the Watson supercomputer is able to combine foods and tastes in innovative and unusal ways. Image: IBM

A new app unveiled in test version called "Chef Watson with Bon Appetit" aims at helping cooks "draw on Watson's advanced cognitive capabilities to create entirely new recipes and gastronomic combinations that have previously never been conceived," IBM said.

The kitchen becomes the new proving ground for Watson, which has been working on fighting cancer and other medical applications, after a successful challenge on the TV game show "Jeopardy."

The new app is the part of the Chef Watson program introduced this year by IBM and the Institute of Culinary Education.

Mike Rhodin, Senior Vice President at IBM Watson Group said the goal "is to help people discover the potential of cognitive computing systems."

New combinations of tastes

"These systems can understand vast amounts of data, compounds, and formulas as well as learn from interactions with people and information, in a far more intuitive way," Rhodin said in a statement.

Bon Appetit, which tested some recipes using Chef Watson, offered a few examples of the recipes cooked up with the help

of the supercomputer.

These include cabbage-tamarind coleslaw with fried onions, fennel-spiced ribs with apple-mustard barbecue sauce and grilled corn and nectarine salad with chili powder, coriander, basil and cumin.

For dessert, Watson offered up a berry cobbler with lemon zest, sour cream, buttermilk and the unusual addition of marjoram, which according to the magazine was among the favorites of testers.

"At Bon Appetit, we were curious to see what Watson could discover that was never previously considered, helping unlock a chef's creativity," said Editor-in-Chief Adam Rapoport.

"We see the intersection of technology and food sparking new thinking and creativity not only in our own test kitchen, but in our reader's homes as well."

Source: AFP via I-Net Bridge

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