

Stevia: The Natural Choice by An Ho ~ R&D Director

Reducing sugar in our diets continues to be widespread. When Stevia first came out, about 10 years ago, people basically referred to it as Rebaudioside A, a sweet component in the stevia leaf. Now, Reb B, M, D and E are also extracts from the stevia leaf that can be used as a sugar replacement.

Stevia has come a long way in its development over the years. The taste is cleaner, the solubility has improved, and other ingredients can mask the off-notes that were associated with using stevia. Each of the Rebaudioside components, whether A, B, M, D or E, have distinct characteristics. For example, Reb B has great solubility; Reb M tastes better; Reb M does not readily dissolve; Reb A has a lingering sweetness dissimilar to sugar. However, flavors and modulators can be added to combat any weaknesses.

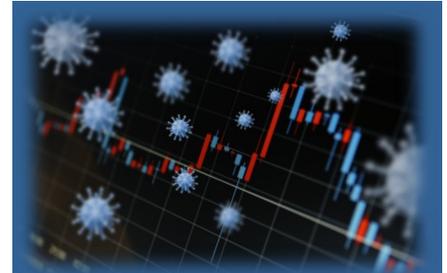
Since stevia has been around for over 10 years, there are many studies that observe how the human body processes it. The Journal of Nutrition stated that stevia has shown to lower blood pressure, blood sugar, and insulin levels. Stevia does not raise blood sugar levels like real sugar, has zero calories, is natural, and has no adverse health effects. For these reasons, nutritionists typically recommend stevia to patients with diabetes or prediabetes.

So, there seems to be a lot of good things going for stevia. Another clue that it is rising in popularity is large ingredient companies are manufacturing or partnering with stevia production. Tate and Lyle, Ingredion (PureCircle), ADM and Cargill all have their own lines of stevia. They are supplying to brands that are looking to reduce sugar content in their products by up to 100%.

Fall is Here! by Charlie Hall ~ Food Technologist

We've been looking at the fall flavor trends gaining popularity this year. Although pumpkin spice is still number one, a few favorites are following in its footsteps. We've seen an increase in cinnamon and apple cinnamon profiles across multiple industries, like baked goods, dairy, and snack foods. Another fall flavor that's been hitting the shelves is maple. Not only is maple used as a sweetener in a variety of meat products, dressings, and baked goods, but the maple flavor profile is also quickly becoming the star of the show. While maple syrup is a year-round staple, it is not hard to imagine it as a quintessential flavor in the time of year when you think of leaves changing color and crisp fall air. From cookie sandwiches and doughnuts, to sausage links and salmon, maple can complement a wide range of food products.

At IFPC, we have a fall-flavor portfolio that is sure to satisfy your autumnal cravings. We offer a maple-flavored milk blend that uses pure maple sugar as a sweetener and a flavor enhancer. Additional milk blends available include pumpkin spice and cinnamon roll flavored. IFPC's eggnog portfolio includes several classics, as well as pumpkin spice, pecan pie, and apple pie flavored eggnog - all perfect for this time of year.



Post Covid-19 Flavor Trends by Charlotte Steuby ~ Intern

Three main themes are emerging in the dairy market including nostalgic, holistic, and adventurous. Nostalgic flavors are childhood classics as seen in the chocolate milk space. Holistic flavors come from ingredients that offer health benefits. Flavors like lavender, ginseng, turmeric, and hibiscus offer immune support and stress reduction. Adventurous flavors are those that are unfamiliar to the consumer or incorporate exotic destinations. Flavors such as citrus yuzu and ube, sweet potato's purple cousin, Roman raspberry, Caribbean coconut, and Tahitian vanilla.

According to IFT, taste is the number one buying criteria for food. However, consumers' tastes are ever changing. It is important to keep up with flavor trends when working in the food industry for this reason.

For more information, email us at info@ifpc.com.

The Chicory Root Dilemma by Emily O'Chiu ~ Product Development Scientist



Chicory root can be found on a label under many different names: chicory root fiber, chicory root extract, inulin, oligofructose, or fructo-oligosaccharide. With the current supply chain stresses, chicory root is in short supply and difficult to source. It is a versatile ingredient with several different uses across the food industry. Focusing on the function chicory root is performing in your product can help lead the way to finding the right replacement.

Inulin: If your ingredient legend declares 'inulin,' it can be sourced from Jerusalem artichoke instead of chicory root without any need for a label change.

Fiber Source: Soluble corn fiber and polydextrose are both clean tasting fibers that, like chicory root, are allowed to be declared as dietary fiber under the new FDA nutrition label guidelines. They also have the benefit of adding fiber without an unnecessary change in texture or viscosity.

Prebiotic: Prebiotics are fibers that help maintain a healthy digestive system. Oat and lentil derived fibers can be used as a prebiotic in place of inulin.

Bulking agent: Polydextrose or maltodextrin can be used as bulking agents that help disperse concentrated active ingredients without effecting overall product performance.

Sugar replacer: Allulose and erythritol are both low calorie sugars with about 70% of the sweetness of regular sucrose. They are available in liquid and powder form and have roughly the same use rate of chicory root fiber when used for sugar replacement.

Creamy mouthfeel: Konjac flour can replace inulin to build creaminess in low fat or fat free foods. Konjac is a thickening agent, so gums in the formula, like guar and locust bean gum, should be decreased when it is added.

Facts Panel: New Addition by Rachel Stefaniw ~ Lab Manager

Choline is a newer addition to the Nutrition Facts panel. When the FDA released updates to the Nutrition Facts label in 2016, choline was added to the list of vitamins and minerals essential in human nutrition, with an RDI of 550 mg. Choline can help with brain development in babies and toddlers, and is commonly added to infant formula and snacks for this age group. However, it is useful well beyond the early years. Choline has been found to aid in cognition, metabolism, and even athletic performance and endurance. Unfortunately, most Americans' diets do not provide enough of this nutrient. Since many foods do not naturally provide high levels of choline, choline chloride, and choline bitartrate can be used to fortify foods and beverages.



Brought to you by IFPC's Trends Teams

The Secret Ingredient is a quarterly newsletter summarizing the efforts of IFPC's Trends Team. The Trends Team is comprised of An Ho, R&D Director; Jenn Adams, Business Development Manager; Renee Famula, Marketing Manager; Charlie Hall, Food Technologist, Product Development; Emily O'Chiu, Product Development Scientist; Rachel Stefaniw, Lab Manager, Product Development; Ted Busch, Director of Technical Services; and Mat Brady, Marketing Specialist. For story ideas and comments, please email info@ifpc.com.



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