

STEVIA HISTORY AND FACTS

Stevia is a plant-based, natural-origin, zero-calorie, sustainable sweetening ingredient for foods and beverages. The stevia leaf has been used for its sweetness in parts of the globe for centuries.

ORIGINS

The scientific name for stevia is *Stevia rebaudiana Bertoni*, a member of the Asteraceae or “sunflower” family of plants, native to South America. Stevia has been consumed for hundreds of years in Paraguay, where the indigenous people used the leaves of the plant to sweeten beverages or chewed them for their sweet taste. In 1887, Dr. Moises Santiago Bertoni, a botanist who immigrated to Paraguay, studied and classified the *Stevia rebaudiana* plant known as the *ka'a he'ê* plant, describing its use and sweet characteristics. In the 1930s two French chemists isolated the components called, “steviol glycosides” that give stevia its characteristic sweet taste.

STEVIA IS SAFE

The safety of steviol glycosides in high-purity stevia leaf extracts have been established, based on the safe use of stevia in many parts of the globe, the scientific research, and positive safety opinions. A significant body of research that includes pre-clinical and clinical studies attest to the safety of high-purity stevia leaf extracts for people of all ages.

Japan pioneered the use of stevia leaf extracts which have been approved for use in foods and beverages and consumed in Japan since the 1970s. Since then, all major global regulatory organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization/World Health Organization's Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) have determined high-purity stevia leaf extract to be safe for use by the whole family. To date, more than 150 countries around the world have approved the use high-purity stevia leaf extract as a sweetener for foods and beverages.

STEVIA IS SUSTAINABLE

The farming of the stevia plant and the extraction of the high-purity stevia ingredients are sustainable. Because stevia is so much sweeter than sugar farming stevia does not require a lot of land or water, in fact, it's typically three to four times less than sugar for the equivalent sweetness.

Stevia as a crop appeals to rural communities since it has positive environmental and social impacts in terms of water, waste, energy, and land use. Currently, most stevia farmers grow the plant on small plots of land and use the rest of the land for other crops. By diversifying their crops, farmers are able to maintain the quality of the soil, and improve their economic gain. Further, stevia does not have many natural pests therefore, the use of agrochemicals are comparatively less than the crops it substitutes. End to end, the carbon and water footprint work on stevia has shown from its farming to the high-purity stevia leaf extract, stevia is more sustainable than other natural, mainstream sweeteners.

HOW IS THE PCSI FUNDED?

The PCSI is supported by PureCircle, Ltd, a global leader in purified stevia leaf extract ingredients. PureCircle has a unique innovative portfolio of high-purity stevia sweeteners, and works directly with tens of thousands of farmers across the globe to ensure a reliable supply of ethically and sustainability sourced stevia that also positively contributes to the livelihood of farmers.

HOW CAN I BE INVOLVED?

Sign-up to be part of the **Stevia Community** on the PureCircle Stevia Institute's website. Also join PCSI's Facebook and/or twitter to get regular news and recipes, and watch the PCSI YouTube videos featuring a variety of topics.

By doing so, you will enjoy the latest updates on food and nutrition science, ingredient and taste science, agriculture, the stevia industry and regulatory news, infographics, conference highlights, videos, interviews, as well as healthcare professional tools, and a host of recipes to help you explore the benefits of stevia and share this information with others. It's quick and easy, just subscribe using any of the following ways to connect.

PCSI looks forward to interacting with you and hearing from you about what you want see, what you like, and what the PCSI can do better. Joining the stevia community will also allow you to share and retweet PCSI's information.

CONTACT PURECIRCLE STEVIA INSTITUTE



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To link to the PCSI website, scan this code with your mobile device.



PURECIRCLE
STEVIA INSTITUTESM

ADVANCING THE
SCIENCE OF STEVIA

ABOUT PURECIRCLE STEVIA INSTITUTESM

The PureCircle Stevia InstituteSM (PCSI) provides science-based information about stevia, a plant-based, zero-calorie, sustainable sweetener of natural origin.

Originally founded as the Global Stevia Institute in June 2010, PureCircle Stevia Institute's expanded mission is to advance research and share leading, balanced, science-based information on stevia's benefits and the latest stevia science related to nutrition and health, agriculture, ingredient functionality and taste. By providing science-based education about stevia, the institute furthers the understanding and application of stevia science, contributing to improving diets and enhancing the lives of people across the globe.

MISSION & VALUES

MISSION

The PureCircle Stevia Institute's mission is to advance research and share leading, balanced, science-based information, to educate the science and nutrition communities, as well as consumers globally, about the benefits of stevia. PCSI has three science pillars:

- 1) **Nutrition and Health**
- 2) **Agriculture**
- 3) **Ingredient Functionality and Taste.**

VALUES

Science: Data-driven science always serves as the base of the information the PCSI provides. We understand food and food ingredient choices are very personal. Our goal is to facilitate decision making with sound science.

Transparency: Being transparent in all our efforts is of the utmost importance for maintaining trust in our food supply more broadly, and in stevia more specifically. To do so, we communicate in an open and honest way with all of our audiences from partners to consumers.

Collaboration: To further enhance awareness and education of stevia, the PCSI partners with companies and organizations throughout the world.



WHAT DOES PCSI DO?

The PureCircle Stevia InstituteSM is committed to providing credible and accurate information on stevia and aims to:

- Build a *Stevia Community* that includes advocates, networks of experts and consumers in multiple regions across the globe
- Encourage interactive dialogue with all stakeholders, across science and consumer communities
- Foster improved understanding of stevia through symposia, webinars and training workshops with credible and renowned experts
- Provide continuing education programs in partnership organizations that fit with the PCSI's three pillars
- Develop educational resources and tools on stevia science using both digital and print media
- Facilitate and support the development and publication of cutting-edge stevia science pertaining to nutrition and health, agriculture, and ingredient functionality and taste.

ADVISORY BOARD

The institute is guided by an international board and network of highly-respected, renowned, leading scientists and educators who have scientific and/or practitioner expertise in nutrition science, food, analytical and process science, behavioral science, toxicology, and agriculture. They regularly meet to establish the PCSI's strategy and programs, and to ensure that the science-based education is credible and accurate, and its research expands the body of knowledge on stevia.

WHY STEVIA?

Overweight and obesity in both adults and children continue to be on the rise globally along with related conditions like heart disease and diabetes. There is no one simple solution to these complex issues, but policy makers and health organizations agree that diet plays an important role.

Humans are born with a preference for sweet taste, and for centuries people all over the world have sought out sweet foods and ingredients in nature including honey, maple syrup, and cane sugar. More recently, consumers are looking to reduce calories and sugar in their foods and beverages, and express a preference for a natural, low or calorie-free sweet source. In the past, it was difficult to create a product which caters to both of these consumer needs without compromising taste. High-purity stevia sweeteners are 200 to 350 times sweeter than sugar, and provide an unprecedented opportunity to produce safe, high-quality, no or low-calorie and lower-sugar foods and beverages as part of a healthy lifestyle and/or weight or diabetes management program.

