



GLOBAL
STEVIA
INSTITUTE

**ADVANCING THE
SCIENCE OF STEVIA**

ABOUT GSI

The Global Stevia Institute (GSI) provides science-based information about stevia, a plant-based, zero calorie, sustainable sweetener of natural origin. The GSI was founded in June 2010, to advance and share scientific research and provide education on stevia for health professionals, scientists, public affairs leaders, consumers and food and beverage manufacturers internationally.

By providing science-based education about stevia, the institute aims to foster the understanding and application of stevia science that helps contribute to improving diets and enhancing the lives of people across the globe.

MISSION & VALUES

MISSION

The Global Stevia Institute's mission is to advance and share leading, balanced, science-based information interactively, that helps educate the science and nutrition communities, as well as consumers globally, about the safety and benefits of stevia.

VALUES

Science: Data-driven science always serves as the base of the information the GSI provides. We do understand that food and food ingredient choices are very personal, but our mission is based on science-based information sharing.

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 our audiences from partners to consumers.

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



WHAT DOES GSI DO?

The Global Stevia Institute is committed to providing credible and accurate information on complex issues around stevia. In doing so the GSI 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 across the globe, through digital and social media platforms in multiple languages, focused on the role of stevia in health and nutrition globally.
- Foster dialogue and improved understanding of stevia through the support of symposia, webinars and training workshops with credible and renowned experts around the globe.
- Provide continuing education programs in partnership with health and science organizations.
- 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.

ADVISORY BOARD

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

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, worldwide, people 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 that 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.



STEVIA HISTORY AND FACTS

Stevia is a natural origin, zero calorie, and sustainable sweetening ingredient for foods and beverages. It is a plant extract that has been used as a natural sugar substitute 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, described his discovery of the stevia plant, and 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 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 extracts for people of all ages.

Japan pioneered the use of stevia 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 extract to be safe for use by the whole family. To date, about 150 countries around the world have approved high purity stevia 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. Stevia is 200 to 350 times sweeter than sugar. As a result, the farming process 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 that from its farming to the high purity stevia extract, stevia is more sustainable than other natural mainstream sweeteners.

HOW IS THE GSI FUNDED?

The GSI 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 Global Stevia Institute's website. Also join GSI's Facebook and/or twitter to get regular news and recipes, and watch the GSI YouTube videos featuring a variety of topics.

By doing so, you will enjoy the latest updates on food and nutrition science, 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.

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

CONTACT

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