



## The Evolution of Beauty: Local, Certified Organic Ingredients

We all want natural beauty and most consumers believe that a product made with organic ingredients is better for both their skin and for the Earth. Canada, however, does not have specific guidelines regulating use of the term "organic" on personal care products. There are many, many products on the market claiming they are made with organic ingredients. Unfortunately, most of them are not verified for their authenticity. Consequently, there are no guarantees that a product actually contains a significant proportion of

### Sweet As Can Be

"Things sweet to taste prove in digestion sour"  
Shakespeare

With obesity still on the rise, it is no surprise that there are many products claiming to promote weight loss. Among the most popular are artificial sweeteners. Companies advertise zero-calorie or sugar-free foods and drinks, gum, snacks, and others as a healthy alternative to food items sweetened with more natural forms of sugar. The concept of satisfying cravings for sweets without consum-

### Wild or What?

Many people may already be aware that both asparagus and rhubarb are cultivated, but both also grow wild. Rhubarb is not native to North America and landed on both coasts in the mid 18<sup>th</sup> century, but like many other plants, it escaped the garden and has thrived in the wild. Be sure to look for its clump of greenish-red stalks and dark green leaves and not a single stock - that's more likely yellow dock, which is also edible but has different uses. Rhubarb has been used in China since ancient times for healing purposes. Studies have found two phytonutrients known as anthraquinones were capable of inhibiting cancer cell growth and in inducing apoptosis (cancer cell death)(1, 2, 3) Asparagus also came over from Europe in the 1700s and was equally adept at escaping the gar-



organic ingredients.

Here's an example of one popular product: "organic" lavender oil. Lavender has wonderful properties that help to relax and purify the body, and manufacturers can convince consumers that their lavender-containing product is even more beneficial by introducing an "organic lavender" oil. To make this claim on the label, they need only add 1 ml of certified organic lavender oil to a 50ml bottle.  
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ing excess calories from sugar, thereby contributing to a healthy body weight, is appealing; however, research has proven that artificial ingredients typically have disadvantages. Most of us recognize the trade names Nutrasweet, Equal and Splenda, some of the most common artificial sweeteners. Here is a brief overview of the research indicating their impact on human health.  
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den for the wild and has been used for its healing properties for over 200 years. It contains probiotics fiber to help feed the good bacteria (4, 5). Currently research has discovered its phytonutrients to be both anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidants (6). Cancer research with asparagus shows promise but so far it is all on rats and mice (7, 8, 9).

Both asparagus and rhubarb contain oxalic acid, a chemical that has been suspected to play a role in calcium-based kidney stones, though no conclusive evidence exists (read last month's issue) and there appears to be more benefits to this chemical than were previously known. So enjoy both these wonderful escapees from the gardens should you come across them in the forest or fields.

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*"The fruits were jewels"*  
Charles Dickens



## Sweet As Can Be

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### Nutrasweet & Equal

Both Nutrasweet and Equal are brand names for aspartame, a calorie-free artificial sweetener which is 180 times sweeter than sugar. Aspartame appears in over 6,000 products on the market including chewing gum, soft drinks and flavoured drinks, sugar-free desserts, nutritional supplements, breath mints, and even laxatives (1).

The chemical composition of aspartame is 50 percent phenylalanine, 40 percent aspartic

### Acesulfame-K (potassium):

Known on the market as Sweet One, Ace-K is another example of an artificial sweetener without calories. It is 1,200 times sweeter than sugar, hence the name "Sweet One". Despite some evidence of cancer growth in ani-

### Splenda

Splenda is the brand name for sucralose, an artificial compound that converts the sucrose molecule (two single sugars bound together, such as glucose and fructose) into a fructogalactose molecule that is not found in nature. Splenda is advertised as being natural because it started out as sugar and is considered calorie-free since the body does not metabolize or digest it (5); nonetheless, a study published in 2007 found that rats that ingested artificial sweeteners, including su-

acid, and 10 percent methanol (wood alcohol). Phenylalanine cannot be metabolized by the body and is therefore life threatening for those with the disorder PKU (phenylketonuria) (1). For this reason, aspartame must be identified on the label of all products sold in Canada that contain it as an ingredient. Formaldehyde, another by-product of aspartame, has been shown to shrink important immune-supporting T-cells and initiate cell death in rats (2, 3).

mals, it is FDA-approved and has not been retested for its safety on humans in decades. Ace-K is not metabolized or stored in the body and therefore can be marketed as having zero calories (4).

cralose absorbed the substance due to signals from intestinal compounds (6). Furthermore, although manufacturers claim that Splenda does not interfere with digestion, a 2008 study conducted on rats found that a daily FDA-recommended dose of Splenda caused a reduction in beneficial fecal microflora, increased fecal pH and increased levels of compounds known to limit the bioavailability of medications (7). Researchers suspect the same occurs in the human digestive tract.

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It is 100 percent legal to say this is an organic product even though 98 percent of the product is non-organic and could contain harmful pesticide residues, synthetic fragrances, sulfates, parabens, DEET and a host of other ingredients that are a risk to human health.

Early this year at the Canadian Organic Growers (COG) conference, Alain Menard, Simon Jacques and Ellery West, dedicated producers of organic personal care and beauty products, participated in a panel discussion addressing ambiguity in this industry. Though testing is becoming more stringent and regulations are slowly being put in place, well-meaning consumers are unknowingly exposing their children and themselves to ingredients they'd rather avoid in personal care products. Health Canada has found up to 400 EU-banned carcinogenic chemicals in

"natural" body care products. Baby products were first up for testing because of the fragility of their users. Of the 48 baby products tested by the Environmental Working Group, 82 percent contained, but did not list, formaldehyde, a known carcinogen, allergen and irritant. 61 percent contained 1,4 dioxane, which is similar to sodium lauryl sulfate, and 68% of the products tested contained both chemicals. Case in point: Huggies Natural Care Wash for Hair & Body has sodium lauryl sulfate and carcinogens that come with processing using ethylene oxide – but at least these byproducts of ethyloxylation are listed on the label. Johnson & Johnson Lavender Baby Lotion does not contain any actual lavender, and they list fragrance-enhancing phthalates on their product, claiming that they are "safe" xenoestrogens.

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## Magnesium is Not Just For Bone...

Calcium contracts muscles and magnesium relaxes them. The heart is a muscle and perhaps a study on the supplementation of calcium and its connection to heart issues would have been better constructed if the researchers had included a group that took calcium, magnesium and Vitamin D. A 1994 study looking at magnesium supplementation and cardiovascular risk Type II diabetics found a positive preventative correlation (1). Many studies have shown magnesium can help lower blood, pressure and help prevent irregular heartbeats and can help reduce the risk of death from acute heart attacks. Most foods that contain significant amounts of calcium also contain significant amounts of magnesium so it makes sense that supplements should reflect this as well (2-19).

### Make-up for Men?

**Is this a direction we want to go?**

A recent infomercial made a case for make up for men. While some might argue that covering disfiguring scars is helpful, do we really care if a man has a few bags under his eyes or a few nicks from shaving? Is rugged no longer considered attractive? Perhaps this is one instance where men can skip the women's example and avoid having to find the healthy alternative that we, as females, are now forced to find.



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As providers of an alternative to misleading natural beauty care products, the COG panelists presented the public health consequences of exposure to synthetic chemicals that bioaccumulate in bodily fluids and fat tissues from a young age. Indeed, a 2008 study in the journal *Pediatrics* found that 100 percent of all 163 urine samples from infants contained at least one type of phthalate, and 7 out of 10 contained at least seven different types of these known endocrine modulators. What's a parent to do? This is one of the questions Alain Menard and Karen Clark asked themselves when they saw their son Joshua drinking the phthalate-laced bubbles in his bath water. They decided that all products that come in contact with their son's skin should be safe for consumption. In other words, if it's not safe enough to be *in* the body, it's not safe enough to be *on* the body either.

Menard and Clark started the Green Beaver Company, a 100 percent Canadian, 100 percent certified organic personal care product company based in Ontario and Quebec. They focussed on certified organic children's products such as shampoos, body washes,

soap and body balms. Most recently, they became the first company to produce a 100 percent certified organic sunscreen – no small feat if you know the amount of processing that goes into a regular sunscreen. As their product line grew, they also became advocates of industry standards for what's "certified organic". They adhere to the Eco-Cert standards for their company; every company has their own standards with no uniformed guarantee for the consumer. Menard and the other panelists encouraged all consumers to choose standards that are meaningful for us. As consumers, we have the final say on what products stay on the market and we can take a stand with our purchasing decisions to help speed up the process for better regulation of the term "organic" in the personal care and beauty aisle.

Product lines that are guaranteed to be made with natural and organic ingredients: Aubrey Organics, Avalon Organics, Burt's Bees, Desert Essence, Dr. Bronner's, Dr. Hauschka, Green Beaver, TerrEssential, Zia Fresh.

To view a complete list of products tested for 1, 4-dioxane, visit [Organic Consumers](#)

## Wild or What?

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Asparagus, lightly steamed can be used in salads, and is a great vegetable for stir fries and stews. Rhubarb can be used in savory dishes but it truly shines in desserts such as

pies, cobblers and crisps. It can also just be stewed with a little water and the whole sweetener of your choice such as honey, maple syrup or coconut sweetener in a saucepan until it softens.

### Salmonberries

As we start the summer we also begin berry season. Many varieties of wild berries grow throughout Canada and the U.S., including different families of gooseberries, currants, raspberries or variations of the blueberry family. Not all berries are edible, so be sure to check with your local conservation authority to find out the best edible options in your area. Our first feature berries are salmonberries, local to British Columbia and the west coast including Alaska, Oregon and Washington. They vary in colour from light



pink to orange. Early settlers looked for salmonberries in the spring as their earliest source of fresh Vitamin C. They are quite sour at first but sweeten as they ripen. Like all berries, salmonberries contain powerful polyphenolic compounds including anthocyanins, but climate and location can affect the amount (10). They can easily be used in recipes calling for other berries such as the Berry Rhubarb Crisp in this issue or added to smoothies and shakes. If you do not live on the west coast, you are unlikely to find them but they are available there both fresh and frozen.



### Salvestrols & Skin Cancer

How can we treat skin cancer without relying on pharmaceutical drugs? Dr. Schaefer discussed protocols for using Salvestrols for skin cancer with CAHN-Pro's Eleanor Healy:

What are salvestrols:

- Natural compounds in fruit shown to destroy sick cells in the body
- Organic agriculture encourages production of Salvestrols with a plant response to a fungal attack

Structure of the Salvestrol topical cream:

- Contains four Salvestrol compounds that are metabolized by the CYP1B1 protein enzyme (seen to be a universal marker for cancer cells) and this brings about the destruction of the cancer cell
- Hydrophilic/Lipophilic (capsules) and Lipophilic (cream) Salvestrols get there by different mechanisms but are metabolized the same way within the body (both are recommended for Melanoma as it metastasizes quickly)

How was the product tested?

- Studied the behaviour of human healthy cells vs cancer cells when various levels of Salvestrol compounds were added to calculate how the selective compound is found to target cancer cells highly selective way

Click [here](#) for more info



## Sweet As Can Be

### CONTINUED FROM PG 2 ...

Do Artificial Sweeteners Stimulate Appetite? Despite the marked difference in calorie intake, one study showed that neither artificial sweeteners nor sugar appear to increase appetite in human participants, but *both* significantly increase blood glucose levels (12). On the other hand, Green Stevia (a natural sweetener derived from the leaves of a South American shrub of the daisy family) also did not increase appetite, and at the same time reduced postprandial blood glucose and insulin levels, suggesting that stevia may assist with glucose regulation (8). The stevia leaf also

contributes antioxidants and phenols – another reason why it's preferred over artificial sweeteners (13).

Overall, further studies are needed to determine whether or not there are any advantages to consuming artificial sweeteners. Until we know more, if you're looking for something sweet to eat, heed the words of Shakespeare and look for other taste sensations. Pungent foods, such as yogurt or mango are great examples! Or try naturally sweet foods such as blackstrap molasses or maple syrup, all found to contain antioxidants (14).

## Berry Rhubarb Crisp

From: [A Pastry Queen Goes Green](#)

Serves 8

For gluten-free: Use the ingredient option with (GF) after it. Spelt and kamut contain gluten and oats are often milled in the same facility as wheat which means they can contain wheat dust. If you see oats labeled gluten-free – it means they were milled in a gluten-free facility

### Filling:

5 cups fresh rhubarb cut into 1" pieces  
2/3 cup fresh salmonberries or raspberries  
2/3 cup blueberries, preferably wild (any type of berry can be used to prepare this recipe)

1 1/2 tbsps spelt flour or brown rice flour (GF)

1 cup organic Sucanat sugar\*

### Crisp Topping:

1/3 cup rolled oat flakes or quinoa flakes (GF)

1/2 cup spelt flour or brown rice flour (GF)

1/2 cup kamut flour or bean flour (GF) or tiger-nuts flour (GF)

1/3 cup butter or coconut oil

1/8 tsp cinnamon

Pinch sea salt

1/3 cup sucinat sugar\*

2-3 tsp water (helps bind the crisp)



Place flours, baking powder, sea salt, sucinat and butter or coconut oil in a food processor or mixer and process until the butter or oil is cut into the flour and the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In a separate bowl, whisk egg

and milk together. Add the flour mixture to the milk/egg mixture and stir together until blended. Set aside. To make the filling, mix the fruit, flour and sucinat together in a separate bowl. To assemble, spoon the fruit filling into 8" or 9" round or

square baking dish or 10" flan pan. Place the cobbler topping onto the fruit, allowing some lumps to remain. Bake for 40 minutes at 325 degrees F or until the cobbler topping is golden. Serve warm or cool.

\* This recipe works nicely with other sweeteners such as honey, agave, maple syrup or coconut sweetener. If you're substituting these for the sugar, use 3/4 cup of your choice of sweetener for the filling and 1/3 cup of sweetener for the topping.

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