



## “Do You Take Milk or Sugar with That?”

No longer relegated to flavored creamers, additives are fast becoming trendy enhancements to tea and coffee beverages. (By Alexis Rubinstein)

As with any industry, there are purists and those who love the accoutrements. Those who like their steak seasoned with salt and pepper, and people whose mouths water at the sight of a platter of sauces, toppings and garnishes heading towards them. Tea and coffee is no exception. With the quality of products on the rise (whole tea leaves, specialty green beans, even organic fruits and spices), it can be assumed that the purists have become the majority, ordering their coffee black, their tea unsweetened and their grande lattes plain. However, trends within the industry are showing quite the opposite. As tea and coffee quality increases, the popularity in “additives” for these beverages has also jumped. Whatever terminology you choose, be it “additions” or “enhancements,” “condiments” or “supple-

ments,” they are evolving as quickly as the tea and coffee itself, and it is about time they move from the background to the forefront.

### Some Like it Sweet

It has been said that in 1713 the first café opened in Paris when King Louis XIV was presented with a coffee tree. Historically, the first documentation of sugar being added to the drink was in his court, around this time. Perhaps the coffee was too bitter for his liking or it was a matter of a personal sweet tooth, but the idea of coffee and sugar have been a well-known and favorably received couple ever since. Equally as popular is the ever-present combination of tea and sugar, supposedly started by the British and adapted by Southern Americans into their version of “sweet tea.” Today, with calorie counting,

waist-watching imbibers, the addition of sugar has led the way for the advent of the sugar substitute, which eliminates the qualms of sugar while preserving a sweet taste.

“Merisant, the maker of Equal and Canderel sweeteners, has been marketing sweeteners for more than 25 years since aspartame was approved for consumption in Europe (1979) and the U.S. (1982),” says Katherine Wood, vice president of marketing. With Equal’s presence in over 90 countries, its name has become almost synonymous with sugar, and its blue packet a common site in coffee and tea shops around the world. However, just providing an aspartame-based sugar substitute would not be enough. Merisant would need to appeal to the health conscious consumer as well. “Merisant anticipated the need for an all-natural, zero-calorie alternative to sugar. Demographic trends and recent studies show that consumers are seeking a natural alternative to sugar and artificial sweeteners,” explains Wood. “To intensify its efforts in the natural category, Merisant created Whole Earth Sweetener Company in 2006 as a wholly owned subsidiary to focus solely on the development and marketing of all-natural products. That same year Whole Earth launched its first all-natural product, Sweet Simplicity, an ultra-premium, zero-calorie sweetener created from erythritol, a natural sweetener found in grapes and pears.” But, as all innovative minds know, once you have tapped into a new market, you must continuously strive to supply the best product possible. For that reason, another recipe was formulated, using different ingredients and a new Merisant product was added. “Sweet Simplicity only meets a small slice of the consumer demand for natural sweeteners,” Wood revealed, “so Whole Earth continued its quest and found the answer in stevia, a plant native to Paraguay. With stevia we have created PureVia — a sweetener with the clean, crisp taste and look and feel of sugar, but without all the calories. PureVia is made by blending a high purity stevia extract with other natural flavors, which are derived from fruits and honey.”

As the health attributes of tea, and even coffee, are becoming more known, it is only logical that loyal drinkers would want a healthier sweetening option as well. High

blood pressure, tooth decay and calorie counts are all reasons people are putting down the sugar and looking into other options, such as PureVia. “Merisant and Whole Earth keep pace with consumer trends by talking to our customers and monitoring the marketplace. The trends shaping the sweetener category today call for a revolution, not small adjustments to product and packaging. It was this insight that fueled our four-year search for a natural sweetener and culminates today in PureVia,” states Woods. The “clean, crisp taste and look and feel of sugar without the calories” ensures that PureVia will enhance, not overpower the taste of tea or coffee. The products will soon be available in 40 and 80-stick cartons, with a single stick (2 grams) containing no calories.

While Merisant certainly offers a plethora of sugar substitutions for your morning coffee or afternoon tea, these days, the options are seemingly endless. Fine dining establishments often serve up their espressos and cappuccinos with a “swizzle stick” or “rock candy,” a glorious display of crystallized sugar, often colored and placed on a stick for the multi-purpose use of stirring and sweetening. In Mexico they have utilized the agave plant for tequila (which also should not be ruled out as a coffee or tea addition!) for centuries. Recently, they have begun to extract the juice or nectar of the fruit, filter then heat it to hydrolyze the carbohydrates into sugars. The product, naturally containing iron, calcium, potassium and magnesium, is concentrated to a syrup-like liquid a little thinner than honey and ranges in color from light to dark depending on the degree of processing. An exotic option with a mainstream appeal.

### Milking It for All It's Worth

For some coffee and tea “specialists,” adding milk is the cardinal sin. “The dairy notes can mute the natural flavor profile,” they would argue. But still, the world’s drinkers just don’t seem to agree. Not only has the addition of milk in tea morphed from a cultural phenomenon to a worldwide preference, but milk has taken over the coffee industry as well, with most espresso-based drinks containing well over 50% milk in their recipes. Milk has gotten so big that even spin-offs have been created to ensure equal dairy-drinking rights to everyone, even those who technically cannot drink dairy. Soy milk, rice milk, even almond milk have presented alternatives to those that are lactose intolerant, allergic or just non-partial.

“On a visit to a health food store in Vancouver in 2003, Christina Volgyesi and her husband Les stumbled upon a protein powder made from hemp seeds, produced by a small Canadian company called Ancient Harvest,” explains Katie Hunsberger of OrganicWorks. “As an active, nutrition-conscious family, Christina and Les took an immediate interest in the product, as well as the company behind it and the bigger hemp foods category. Within a year, Ancient Harvest became Living Harvest, and Les and Christina had taken on not only a company, but a bigger commitment to establishing hemp as a legitimate, healthy source of nourishment in the U.S. and Canada.” With the help of many industry notables, some bright and inventive packaging ideas and an innovative and experimental approach to health foods, Living Harvest had the formula needed for success. “But it was the introduction of Hempmilk as a breakthrough alternative dairy beverage that catapulted Living Harvest products from the supplement aisle to the mainstream grocery aisle,” explains Hunsberger. “A product that can be used just like dairy milk, consumers across the U.S. (also available in Canada under the name Hempure) are enjoying Hempmilk’s diversity and great taste — whether alone in a chilled glass, blended into a smoothie, in baking or even steamed into lattes or better yet enjoyed as a Hempuccino.” Made from sustainable hemp nuts grown in Canada, the product is made by blending the nuts with water and lightly sweetening the mix.



Hempmilk is available in original, chocolate and vanilla. “Living Harvest Hempmilk is dairy free, soy free, cholesterol free, gluten free, vegan, non GMO, Kosher and contains no trans fats or cane sugar,” Hunsberger says. “Hemp protein is highly digestible and reasonably well-balanced. Hemp seeds are free of the allergen-causing compounds found in soy, dairy and tree nuts. Living Harvest’s Hemp Protein is certified organic, raw and cold-processed without chemicals or solvents.”

A wonderful option for any café or food-service operation, Hempmilk can help assure that anyone, no matter their dietary or life choices, can have their tea or coffee the way in which they truly desire. And while you will not have a store full of red-eyed, giggling (caffeine) addicts, you will have thankful and satisfied customers. “Living Harvest has worked hard to educate Americans and Canadians about the benefits of hemp nutrition and the versatility of hemp as a food source, and hemp production as a livelihood. The team wants to clarify the uses of industrial hemp and erase common misconceptions about hemp and its relation to marijuana,” notes Hunsberger. “This has been accomplished through the use of savvy branding and attractive and informative packaging that appeals to consumers of all kinds and results in products with great shelf-presence. Living Harvest products, especially our colorful line of Hempmilks, are eye-catching and stand out from the other shelf-stable dairy alternatives.”

Living Harvest launched a foodservice campaign to provide Hempmilk as an option in coffeeshops nationwide. The Living Harvest food service team, headed by Carey Johnston who pioneered Oregon Chai,

works closely with coffee shop owners and retailers to teach them and their consumers about the benefits of Hempmilk. “We have also worked with baristas and prominent local chefs to develop recipes using all of our products; we post these recipes on our website and we also include them on our sales sheets to demonstrate to retailers the many ways in which our products can be manipulated to produce delicious meals and dishes,” says Hunsberger. She also notes that the optimal steaming temperature for Hempmilk is between 140-150F°. Similar to soy, but slightly lower than dairy.

For those on the environmentally conscious bandwagon, Good Cow, an Idaho-based milk company has taken the dairy farm concept and gone green. According to the website, “Sustainability and a reduced carbon footprint have been Good Cow objectives from the beginning. A direct relationship with our farmers, on-farm processing and concentrated products have helped us maintain our vision for an environmentally superior product. Direct control of our feed source, through either feed contracts or growing feed directly on our farms, help to manage the impact our partner farms have on the environment. Through these direct relationships, we are able to monitor land use and appropriate management of insecticide and herbicide treatments. All farmers that we use are pre-certified for quality and herd health, and our milk is monitored and measured by in-house lab testings as well as state and federal inspections. All our farms are managed by dairy professionals and overseen by on-site veterinarians. In our Good Cow reverse osmosis process, we extract approximately 60% of the water that is found in milk. We then use that

water inside of our facilities for preliminary



wash downs and for irrigation of our fields. Our process is directly on farm, so most of the milk that we use does not ever see the inside of a milk tanker — it gets pumped directly from the farm’s tanks to our processing facility. Therefore, no diesel is used to haul the milk to our processing site.

When we do ship our finished products, we are shipping 4 lbs instead of 9 lbs — think of all the fuel we save!”

### Odds and Ends

Milk and sugar are by far the world’s most popular tea and coffee additions, but they have only paved the way for future ideas, innovations and interpretations of existing ingredients. “Ten or so years ago, VanDrunen Farms began the Futuresueticals aspect of the operation, which serves as a storefront to supply the health food industry,” explains John Hunter, vice president of business development for the company. “It is a completely different culture in terms of analyzed actives,” he explains, “more science driving the equation.” About six years ago one of their scientists came up with the idea (and quickly patented) to process and use the



whole coffee fruit for beverages, snacks, etc. According to Hunter, the company is currently in negotiations with beverage companies. Using coffee from no particular

origin, but keeping it exclusively Arabica beans, Coffeeberry has eliminated the usual waste when cultivating the bean from the cherry and instead uses the whole fruit. Due to the system of cultivation and harvest, the quick processing has also eliminated the harmful mycotoxins. “Aside from the additional antioxidants and increased nutritional value, Coffeeberry enhances the coffee by adding a thicker, richer mouth feel,” describes Hunter. “If Coffeeberry is brewed into a pot

of coffee, it brings an added richness and a wider palate; in tea, it brings a pleasant nutty flavor...and its very provocative to be able to say, ‘I’m adding coffee to your tea.’” The product is available in multiple forms: drum-dried powder, perfect for RTD or ready-to-mix formulations; freeze-dried powder; a liquid concentrate; and whole granules, ideal for teabags. Currently, Futuresueticals has a dedicated plantation in Mexico where the process is started. According to Hunter, “Due to the interest from potential partners, we will be setting up processing facilities at other origins possibly in the future.” While the equipment used and process itself are secret, Hunter was kind enough to disclose that “it’s all based on traditional water and ethanol extractions, with a few added twists along the way.”

As for the Coffeeberry demographic, it’s about as varied as coffee itself. Coffeeberry and Coffeeberry Energy, with as high as 50% caffeine, target everyone from “young people looking for a new coffee drink,” to “the health conscious consumer.” “Bioresearch has discovered that coffee berries have the ability to affect the enzyme in our blood called elastase,” explains Hunter. “Elastase is a degenerative enzyme that degrades elastin, keeping our skin flexible and helps prevent wrinkles. This enzyme is also essential in maintaining viability and integrity of cardiac muscle.” All of Futuresueticals research is done on-site by a number of scientists and organic and physical chemists. Knowing that most consumers are weary of the health

### TEA BAG THREAD FOR ALL TYPES OF TEA-PACKING MACHINES



Zwirner & Wutach GmbH  
P.O. Box 1163  
79776 Stühlingen - Germany  
Phone +49/ 7741/ 9398-0  
Fax +49/ 7741/ 9398-20  
info@zwirner-wutach.com  
www.zwirner-wutach.com

claims that some companies make, Hunter remarks, "Consumers are demanding more value and are less willing to accept rumor or believe that something is effective based on faith. More and more, they are demanding 'show me' the numbers, the science behind it all; more and more they are becoming more informed. They're becoming more sensitive to the fact that maybe they do have control over their own destiny and can live better lives, healthier lives, than they are now."

With all the varieties of milk, sugar and other products that can be added to enhance the everyday cup of tea or coffee, one must ponder how to get these selections into the hands of consumers. Most coffee shops and tea salons have adapted the "create your own" bar, a common countertop loaded with milk of different percentages, sugar of different packet colors and the occasional cinnamon and cocoa duster. However, SureShot Dispensing of Nova Scotia, Canada, has found the cure for the common carafe. A true "comprehensive company," SureShot offers everything from sugar and dairy dispensers to their own line of flavors with an accompany-

ing "flavorshot machine." Richard Khan of SureShot explains that the flavors produced by the company are different than others on the market. "Once the regular coffee is brewed, then there is the opportunity to add a concentrated SureShot Beverage Flavor in very small, very accurate portions directly to a cup of coffee using the SureShot Flavor Dispenser." More commonly than not, flavorings are added during the roasting process. The ability to add a SureShot Beverage Flavor after the coffee is roasted, ground and brewed can be a liberating concept for most café owners and foodservice workers. "Flavors are formulated for higher quality for full 10 oz – 20 oz cup drinkability; over wider temperature changes and over a much longer time period than just for a typical 1-oz sample," describes Khan.

"For the operator the economics are very attractive. They are able to offer customers an



expanded coffee menu without investing in multiple coffee grinders, brewers, pots, burners and an inventory of higher priced flavored coffee beans. The operator marketing opportunity is an excellent one. Servers are able to offer customers a cup or carafe of french vanilla, hazelnut, caramel, etc; in addition to a regular blend." With the SureShot Flavor Dispenser, the flavor choice can be picked and the cup even created by the customer, "twist and click," says Khan, "and flavor is just a couple of button pushes away."

We might all secretly wish that society would learn to love the strength and acidity of a good Ethiopian Yirgacheffe or appreciate the earthy flavor of a cup of African roobius, but the reality is...they probably won't. There will always be customers that will demand their milk and crave their sugar, need that extra boost of caffeine or yearn for a hazelnut latte. It is our job to appease them, ensure that they are satiated and provide them with the best quality coffee and tea additions on the market.

**NO SUBSTITUTES**

The name says it all!

- QUALITY
- DEPENDABILITY
- RELIABILITY

The industry standard and the preferred faucet for coffee and beverage dispensing.

*No Substitutes*

**Torinson Industries**  
 Tel: 216/587-3400 or 800/945-4588  
 (U.S. & Canada)  
 Fax: 216/587-6192 or 800/945-0959  
 (U.S. & Canada) | www.torinsonind.com  
 World Class, Worldwide

**BLUE MOUNTAIN COFFEE**  
 (EUROPE) LIMITED

Your first stop in Europe  
 for  
 Jamaica Blue Mountain  
 Coffee

**Langford Brothers**  
 Importers & merchants of fine coffees  
 London England

telephone:  
 (+44) 20 7 584 6379  
 email address:  
 pdb@bluemountaincoffeejamaica.com  
 website address:  
 www.bluemountaincoffeejamaica.com