



“FRUIT JUICE MATTERS”



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There are continual debates regarding the consumption of 100% fruit juices. Often we find conflicting or misleading information in the media. It is therefore important to understand the science behind 100% fruit juices; clear up the misconceptions; and study the health benefits to make informed decisions. Here are a few simple considerations:

100% fruit juice has no added sugar: There are no added sugars in 100% fruit juice and it is prohibited by law. Fruit juice contains around 10% sugars which are all naturally occurring in the whole fruit from which the juice is squeezed. The remaining 90% is made up of water; vitamins such as vitamin C; minerals such as potassium; and phytonutrients. It should also be remembered that hydration is important and people generally need 5 glasses of liquids per day.

100% fruit juice should not replace whole fruit: The recommended intake of fruit and vegetables is at least 400gm per day or at least 5 portions a day. Most people are not eating the recommended amounts and therefore a daily glass of 100% fruit juice is a sensible and convenient complement to whole fruit in achieving the recommended levels of consumption. Studies also suggest that people who drink fruit juice have a more adequate nutrient intake than those who don't and importantly also tend to consume more whole fruit and vegetables.

100% fruit juice should be consumed as part of a balanced diet: Today in addition to unhealthy lifestyles people eat more foods high in energy, fats and salt than in the past and not enough fruit and vegetables. Too much sugar, no matter what kind, is not healthy and therefore energy dense and nutrient deficient foods and beverages should be limited or avoided. One small glass of a refreshing and tasty 100% fruit juice is therefore beneficial once a day. Like all other foods and drinks, 100% fruit juice is best in moderation.

Today myths cloud both the consumer and healthcare communities understanding of the benefits of fruit juice. I would encourage you to do your own research. A good place to start is www.fruitjuicematters.eu from which the above comments were extracted.

In other news

- We expect the Sugar Tax, or now called Health Promotion Levy, to be implemented in the New Year and proposed legislation is currently under review. 100% fruit juices are excluded.
- In addition debates between the various primary and processing agricultural sectors and the Department of Agriculture continue over their controversial move to appoint private Assignees to implement Inspection Services, the costs of which are now to be borne by industry. Whilst we support regulations and compliance, we continue to object to proposed implementation plans which are both impractical and also excessively costly.

The drought continues to hamper agriculture in especially the Western and Eastern Cape. Despite these trying times we wish all producers the very best for the upcoming summer crops.

Rudi Richards
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