

## Suzanne's Specialties

Customers & Friends:

March 5th, 2012

Suzanne's has been closely following the recent news articles regarding arsenic in rice products. These reports follow prior findings on trace levels of arsenic in apple juice and grape juice.

The fact is that all minerals, including arsenic and other heavy metals, are naturally occurring in the Earth's crust and have been dispersed onto the surface of the earth by volcanic activity over the course of millions of years. Our planet's minerals can be neither created nor destroyed. The fact is that all grains and cereals as well as fruits and vegetables absorb arsenic from the soil to various degrees.

It has been widely known in the scientific community that rice assimilates (takes up) arsenic to a greater extent than other grains, as do certain fruits & vegetables. That said, the fact remains that the highest levels of arsenic intake from foods are not even land-based, but rather come from the consumption of seafood & shellfish due to the assimilation of arsenic by kelp, algae, and other marine microorganisms.

With specific reference to brown rice syrup (conventional & organic), the amount of arsenic contained therein is at, or below, the levels found in the raw brown rice from which it is produced. When the news of arsenic levels in brown rice syrup was first publicized, we immediately increased our testing protocols. Besides monitoring the situation closely, Suzanne's is also engaged in research efforts designed to reduce the levels of arsenic present in our products.

Over the past few decades, the FDA has been sampling and testing a variety of rice products to evaluate what the risk is, if any, and what the real levels of arsenic are in rice products. To date, the FDA has not set any guidelines or threshold limits for arsenic levels in rice. It is important to recognize that rice and rice containing foods have been consumed for centuries by all populations and cultures. It is further recognized that low levels of arsenic may indeed be essential for good health and nutrition. Until some educated position is taken by the FDA on rice products, there is no logical basis for alarm.

In the interim, Suzanne's Specialties will continue to provide the highest quality of natural sweeteners within the natural/health foods industry.



Susan Morano  
President