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Ten Food Items You Might Be Surprised to Learn Contain HFCS

Linda Bonvie

Back in the 1980s, when HFCS was a fairly new food ingredient, it was being touted as “better use of an abundant homegrown crop” in a trade publication ad for Cargill headlined “How the newest ingredient in soda pop helps sweeten the pot for corn growers.” As the ad explained it, a \$90 million expansion of the company’s facilities would, when completed, give it “a total capacity of 1.3 billion gallons of fructose a year... enough to fill a trainload that would stretch 154 miles.” Which is an awful lot of fructose – the very component that the Corn Refiners Association (CRA) has more recently tried to downplay in advertising claiming that HFCS is not really all that high in fructose after all.

But all that extra capacity has apparently been put to use, judging from the way HFCS has morphed way beyond “soda pop” into every conceivable food product that can be made. An example of just how much HFCS is being produced these days comes directly from the CRA itself, which noted in the most recent “Corn Annual” report that total shipments for HFCS for 2011 came to more than 19 billion pounds.

Back when that ad ran, in 1982, USDA numbers for “deliveries” of HFCS only amounted to 26.6 pounds per person each year. But that number has been insidiously rising year after year as this test-tube sweetener has found its way into every kind of food, hitting the 60-pound-per-person mark in 1997 (interestingly, sugar intake has actually declined over the last century according to U.S. Department of Agriculture figures).

So exactly how much HFCS do these various

foods contain? Unless you’re privy to “proprietary” information, as it’s called in the industry, you really have no way of knowing. That’s also true of the actual fructose amount in whatever HFCS “blend” a manufacturer may be using. These unknown fructose concentrations are the subject of a current petition filed with the Food and Drug Administration by Citizens for Health, asking that the agency take action against food and beverage manufacturers using HFCS with fructose amount above 55 percent, the highest amount the FDA allows.

What we do know for sure is that HFCS turns up in some very unexpected places, such as these products:

Progresso Bread Crumbs (Plain): The package says the these bread crumbs will “inspire your passion for the art of cooking...” with “authentic Italian taste,” but you’d be hard pressed to find an “authentic” Italian dish that called for high fructose corn syrup.

Sunsweet Prunes: Referred to on the label as “the American Super Fruit,” there is no doubt that prunes are a healthy as well as a sweet-tasting natural product – and one you would least suspect would harbor an unnatural sweetener like HFCS.

French’s Flavor Infuser 10 Minute Marinade: High fructose corn syrup takes the honor of being the very first ingredient in this concoction, even before water and tomato paste.

Kraft Catalina Anything Dressing: With the claim that it’s “fat free” appearing on four places on the

packaging, this product is apparently intended to be used on more than salad, as the name implies. It also has HFCS is listed as its second ingredient, right after tomato paste.

Kraft Miracle Whip: Kraft calls this popular dressing a “secret blend,” but if you read the label you’ll find that it includes HFCS.

Vlasic Bread & Butter Pickles: HFCS is the second ingredient, right after cucumbers – demonstrating how easy it is to make a sandwich with HFCS in every single ingredient and not even realize it!

Mott’s Original Applesauce: Here’s yet another supposedly good-for-you-food bearing a major brand name that’s been adulterated with this cheap and unnatural sweetener. Fortunately, organic unsweetened applesauce is easy to find and just about the same price.

Krusteaz Cranberry Orange Supreme Muffin Mix: How “supreme” could the muffins made from this mix be with HFCS in them?

Heinz 57 Sauce: While the label asserts it will “add zest to steak, chicken & pork,” a glance at the fine print says it will also add HFCS, which is the second ingredient in this sauce after tomato paste.

Campbell’s Healthy Request Vegetable Soup: Also masquerading as a “healthy” product while containing high fructose corn syrup is this new version of an old standard recipe, whose label claims that’s it’s “M’m! M’m! good...for your heart.” But a study, done at that University of California at Davis, found that adults who consumed HFCS for two weeks as 25 percent of their daily calorie requirement had increased blood levels of cholesterol and triglycerides, indicators of increased risk for heart disease. And in 2011, researchers at Georgia Health Sciences University concluded that high fructose consumption by teens can put them at risk for heart disease and diabetes.

The upshot is that despite industry claims that high fructose corn syrup is fine “in moderation,” the

fact that so many diverse types of popular food products have been spiked with it makes consuming “moderate” amounts highly unlikely – unless you’re in the habit of carefully scrutinizing the ingredients of every processed food you buy (or of purchasing organic products). Not to mention that there may well be even higher levels of fructose in many of those items than you’ve been led to believe. You might even say there’s a whole train-load of it just waiting for you in the supermarket.

- *Linda Bonvie, FoodIdentityTheft Blogger and CFH Contributor*

For more information on High Fructose Corn Syrup go to <http://foodidentitytheft.com>

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