

Choosing Juice

Grocery stores dedicate a large amount of square footage to juices and it could sometimes be overwhelming to choose "the right one". Manufacturers use terms like "pure", "fresh squeezed", "not from concentrate" and even use pictures of a straw poked into the natural fruit in order to give you the impression that the beverage inside is the juice squeezed directly from the natural fruit. Some consumers swear by "not from concentrate" juices because they think they are fresher but that may not be the case.

Juice was not part of our regular diet until the beginning of the 20th century when Florida growers harvested an abundance of fruit and the idea of promoting juice was born. Scientists invented a way to freeze orange juice into concentrate and Minute Maid® secured the patent. Tropicana® developed a way to pasteurize juice and sell it in cartons in the 1950s giving us the first "not from concentrate" option.



Simplified Juice Making Process

Different types of oranges are harvested at different times. Large manufacturing plants clean, sort and squeeze the juice and pulp out of the orange separating them. The juice is then concentrated or pasteurized and stored in large vats for the packaging process.

Concentrate/Concentrated/Condensed: These are terms used to describe a product that is still in liquid state after most of the water has been removed.

Dehydrated/Dried/Powdered: These terms are used to describe a product where all the water has been removed and is no longer in the liquid state. Foods that are then restored to their original state should be labeled as "reconstituted" or "from concentrate".

Pure: Canada's Food Inspection agency states that the term "pure" should not be used on labels of, or in connection with, an article of food that is compound, mixture, imitation or substitute.

Fresh Squeezed/Fresh Frozen: Untreated (unpasteurized) fruit juice ferments in a couple of days. This form is usually found in the produce section because of its short shelf life. It may or may not have gone through the pasteurization process.

Cocktail/Beverage: These terms used on juice labels usually mean there are extra ingredients and/or color added.

Pasteurization is the process of treating juice, milk and other foods to kill harmful germs, usually by heating. Some nutrients are stable in high heat while others are not

Importance of Fruits & Vegetables

Phytochemicals or Phytonutrients are natural active compounds found in plant foods including fruits and vegetables and their juices. They work with other plant Nutrients and dietary fiber to help protect against disease and promote good health. Although processing can change the nutrient value of food, it is necessary in order to store the food safely and prolong the shelf life.

One way to judge the amount of processing the product has gone through is to look at the "best before" date. Any product that has a 60-plus day shelf life and is available year-round is likely to have gone through major processing.

It comes down to making the right choices. The amount of sugar, though natural, you consume from a glass of juice in comparison to the actual fruit makes a difference to your body. A glass of apple juice contains the same amount of sugar as six whole apples, which is a lot for your liver to handle. Choosing to consume the fruit in its natural state allows the sugar to trickle slowly to the liver where it can be appropriately processed.

Resources
www.livestrong.com
www.inspection.gc.ca

Fun Food Facts!



Florida oranges are greener than California oranges. The warm night climate in Florida causes the chlorophyll pigments to migrate into the orange peel making it greener

Brazil is the largest producer of oranges in the world

Did You Know?



Vitamin C

The recommended daily allowance for vitamin C is approximately 90mg.

A cup of orange juice contains somewhere between 80 and 125mg of vitamin C.

As juice gets older, and if it's exposed to light or oxygen, the vitamin C degrades. Smaller cartons and clear bottles will contain less Vitamin C, as the smaller containers promote quicker oxidation and the glass exposes the juice to light

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