

Press Room

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Artificial Sweeteners Sent to the Sidelines**By Dennis Marrero***Whole Foods Magazine*

Natural stakes its claim to sweetness.

Today's consumer is not one who will willingly take the good with the bad if there is a better option. This holds true in all aspects of retail. For instance, who wants a CD player when you can have an iPod that holds all of your music, takes pictures and doubles as a phone? In the same respect, who wants a sweetener that will raise your blood sugar when there are natural alternatives that taste just as good and provide an added health benefit?

"This [natural shift] is likely due to an increased awareness about high-fructose corn syrup and the glycemic index," says Arnold Coombs, general manager at Coombs Family Farms, Brattleboro, VT. "And, while artificial sweeteners have grown exponentially, consumer awareness about natural and organic sweeteners also has grown. A general consumer trend exists of a return to simpler times: unprocessed and unrefined sweeteners that come from nature without preservatives and additives."

Syrup-like sweeteners

Other natural sweeteners that fall in this category include brown rice syrup, barley malt and maple syrup. Arnold Coombs of Coombs Family Farms says maple, in particular, is being used in more and more applications and consumers want natural and organic varieties. Products: Coombs Family Farms 100% Pure and Organic Maple Syrup

**For press inquiries about Bascom Family Farms please contact:**

Elizabeth Horton de Meza

ehorton@ethos-marketing.com

Tel. (207) 856-2610 X240

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Bascom Family Farms

Brattleboro, Vermont 05302

802-257-8111