

AÇAÍ FLAVOUR OF THE MONTH AT NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO WEST



Sambazon and Zola are no longer alone in what is fast-becoming a very crowded market for açaí-based products. Not only is the small Brazilian berry fruit popular in beverages, it can now be found in food products such as nutrition bars and also in butters.

“If you can do this at a level that’s sustainable and organic and fair-trade, and you’re building marketing that says it’s great for the brand and for Amazon, consumers are going to like that extra benefit,” Jeremy Black says.

“We knew in the beginning that we couldn’t lead with, ‘Hey, eat this fruit and help save the rainforest’. But now we’re at the point where that can be an important part of our messaging as well.”

AÇAÍ IN INCREASINGLY ABUNDANT SUPPLY

Further evidence of the rising popularity of açaí was found at this year’s Natural Products Expo West which saw a significant increase in the number of products featuring the “tasty, exotic” fruit over the previous year’s offerings. Vying for attention in what is fast-becoming an overcrowded açaí marketplace were products ranging from “superjuices” to snack bars and spreads. A selection of the many and varied açaí-based products to appear at the Expo are described below:

Artisana’s Raw Organic Coconut Butter: Amazon Bliss which lists açaí among its “exotic, delicious, power-packed, superfood” ingredients is one of three Bliss Butters offered by Artisana – a brand under

the Premier Organics company umbrella. The brand, which specialises in the provision of nut butters made from “organic live foods”, suggests that their Amazon Bliss butter, which along with açaí contains maca, goji berries, cacao nibs and coconut butter, can be heated to spoon over fruit, or cooled to make “amazingly delicious, high energy treats.” Cacao Bliss and Goji Bliss complete Artisana’s range.

Earth’s Bounty Superfoods: Touted as a “natural energy superfood”, Earth’s Bounty’s Açaí Juice is one in a range of three “superfoods” now offered by the 15-year-old health food supplement brand. In promotional material the juice is described as an “all-natural, great tasting” beverage “from the rainforests of the Amazon in Brazil”. Consumers are also told that “Açaí contains amino acids needed for energy in the body, anthocyanins & essential Omegas – the good fatty acids. These healthy fatty acids aid in the transport & absorption of fat soluble vitamins A, D, E & K. Açaí also contains energy vitamins B-1, -2 & -3 and beta sitosterol [sic] that helps with physical stress. Açaí’s amino acid profile & trace minerals are perfect to help muscle contraction and it has more protein than an egg.” As well as a juice, Earth Bounty’s Açaí is also available in capsules made from “organic açaí puree”.

Goji and Mangosteen juice complete the “superfood” range.

Dyanmic Health Laboratories Inc.:

This New York State company which was established in 1994 launched three juices for “healthy living” at Natural Products Expo West. 100% juices Açaí Gold, Goji Gold and Mangosteen Gold featured in Dyanmic Health Laboratories recent offerings

Described as “Rich in Antioxidants”, in company promotional material and as an “age-defying superjuice” on the company’s website, the juice is available in 16oz or 32oz opaque plastic bottles. The company also offers an Açaí Juice Blend which contains pomegranate, raspberry and blueberry.

Aristo Health Inc.: Perhaps the most innovative of all the new açaí-containing releases is Aristo Health’s Body and Mind Wellness Nutrition Bar. Nutty Açaí & Lime features in a line which also includes Nutty Pomegranate & Cranberry and Nutty Goji & orange. All the bars come with chocolate and are “boosted” with omega-3s, plant sterols and antioxidants. Aristo, which describes itself as a “new generation health and wellness company specializing in functional foods”, says their new bars contain “super-nutrients” to help support optimal body and mind function.