

# Stevia

*Stevia rebaudiana*



It belongs to the asteraceae and chrysanthemums family.

Small shrub and with an impressive ability to sweeten.

From the leaves of this shrub it is possible to extract a white powder that is 300 times sweeter than cane sugar.

The leaves of this plant have a refreshing taste and do not contain calories, do not alter the blood sugar level and do not cause diabetes.

More info:

[https://www.amu.bio/\\_stevia\\_2](https://www.amu.bio/_stevia_2)

## Cultivation

It is difficult to grow it by sowing, because even if the seeds germinate, stevioside levels (white powder, essence of its leaves) can vary greatly in plants grown from seeds.

The ideal is to cultivate it from the staking process, whose source is high in "stevioside".

It is important to keep in mind that young stevia plants are especially sensitive to low temperatures and therefore must be transplanted in the garden when there is no danger of frost.

## History

Stevia is an ancient plant, originally from Paraguay and Brazil, used as a natural sweetener for centuries.

Widely used by the Guarani Indians for almost 1500 years. They used the plant as a sweetener, which they called "kaa he he" (sweet herb).

### **Utilization**

You can use stevia in the following ways:

- Freshly grinded leaves: Sprinkle the grinded leaves over the food, as if you were using another seasoning. Add them during cooking or when the food is still hot, as the sweet taste is released more easily when the plant is heated.

They can be used in barbecue sauces, sweet and sour sauce, soups, beans, pizza, apple sauce, breads, cookie dough, salads, etc.

- As sugar / sweetener: dry the leaves, then in a mortar crush them until making a powder and use in cooking as if was sugar / sweetener. The leaves should be dried in a place free of moisture and light (e.g. a cupboard). Sunlight can cause early oxidation of the leaves.

Stevia was considered safe for human consumption through rigorous research, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Joint Expert Committee of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO / WHO) in food additives, recognize it as safe.

More than 200 large studies were conducted on it, attesting to its safety in food.

The European Union has approved the use of a sweetener from stevia. Code E960 and / or the designation of steviol glycosides shall identify this additive on food packaging. This sweetener is naturally occurring,

with 40 to 300 times the sweetening power of sucrose, not synthetic, as opposed to citamic acid, aspartame or saccharin. However, this does not mean that it can be used indiscriminately.

The Daily Dose (ADI) was set by the European Food Safety Authority at 4 mg / kg body

weight.

In medical terms, it is considered as hypoglycemic, hypotensive, diuretic, cardiotonic and tonic.

Its leaves are used in cases of diabetes, obsolescence, dental caries, hypertension, depression, sugar dependence and infections.