

The Health From The Sun® Times

Shedding Light on the Latest Essential Fatty Acid News, Research and Information

Issue 3

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Flaxseed Gets the FDA Recognition It Deserves

Great news for FLAX! Official GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) approval by the FDA is finally happening. Although several US government agencies including the Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recognized flax as an acceptable and appropriate source of omega-3 fatty acids many years ago, it is only now that the FDA is taking notice.

What does “GRAS” mean? GRAS status establishes that an ingredient is safe for use in foods and beverages. Under the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, a substance that is intentionally added to food is considered a food additive and is subject to a formal premarket review and approval by FDA, unless the substance is generally recognized among qualified experts as having been adequately shown to be safe (GRAS). In January 2009, a panel of qualified experts determined that whole and milled flax should be awarded GRAS status. Finalization from the FDA is expected before the end of this year.

Why is this important?

With GRAS status, flax will be considered a ‘new’ food ingredient, and consumer awareness of its benefits will surely increase. In addition, prior to achieving such status, the FDA would not even consider issuing a health claim for flax. GRAS status as a food ingredient opens up this possibility, which would allow noticeable changes in how we can present the benefits of flax to the consumer.

More than just oil & fiber

Human consumption of flax dates back thousands of years as both food and medicine. The major nutritional components are its oil, protein, and dietary fiber. The oil contains 50-55%



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of the omega-3 essential fatty acid Alpha-Linolenic Acid (ALA), an amount which far exceeds that of most plant oils with the exception of chia and perilla oil. Additional nutrients include antioxidant compounds and a special class of plant nutrients called lignans, which are both antioxidants and phytoestrogens. Research has suggested that lignans may help block certain enzymes involved in undesired sex hormone metabolism, and may interfere with abnormal cell growth. An article in the April 2009 issue of Consumer Reports on Health entitled *The Benefits of Flax* (p. 10) discusses special nutrients found in crushed or ground flaxseeds that are not found in fish oil. These nutrients are lignans, or “compounds that alter the way the body handles estrogen.” The Consumer Reports on Health article continues to cite a small study of women with

menopausal symptoms who believed that daily flaxseed consumption helped to ease their hot flashes and night sweats. The complete article can be found at: <http://www.consumerreports.org/health/natural-health/the-benefits-of-flax/overview/the-benefits-of-flax.htm> Most consumers are more familiar with the benefits of flaxseed’s omega-3 and fiber content than its lignan content. However, many researchers are focusing their attention on the health benefits of lignans and increased consumer awareness will undoubtedly follow. Below are some current research studies published on flaxseed (not oil) and lignans.

Nutr Cancer. 2008; 60(5): 612-8.

Effect of dietary flaxseed on serum levels of estrogen and androgens in postmenopausal women.

Results suggest that dietary flaxseed may help lower serum levels of sex steroid hormones, especially in overweight/obese women. Lowering levels of these sex hormones could have positive implications for breast health in postmenopausal women.

Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers & Prevention. 2008; 17:3577-3587.
Flaxseed Supplementation (Not Dietary Fat Restriction) Reduces Prostate Cancer Proliferation Rates in Men Presurgery

Researchers concluded that flaxseed is associated with biological changes that could be protective for prostate health.

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Recent studies suggest additional benefits of flaxseed lignans, distinct from their effects on sex hormones and cell proliferation.

Br J Nutr. 2008; Sep 8:1-5. *Effects of a flaxseed-derived lignan supplement on C-reactive protein, IL-6 and retinol-binding protein 4 in type 2 diabetic patients.*

Elevated C-reactive protein (CRP), a protein produced by the liver and indicator of inflammation in the body, is associated with insulin resistance and diabetes. This study suggests lignans might help modulate CRP levels in type 2 diabetics.

Br J Nutr. 2009. *Dietary Intake of Lignans Linked to Lower BMI and Total Body Fat Mass and Improved Insulin Sensitivity*

In this study, postmenopausal women with a high dietary intake of lignans had lower BMI (Body Mass Index) and total body fat mass, as well as a better glucose disposal rate (better sensitivity to insulin) than those women with a low intake of lignans.

Health From The Sun® FiProFLAX™, Sprouted FiProFLAX™, Super FiProFLAX™ and Men's FiProFLAX™ contain the most significant amounts of lignans within our product line.

Flax Lignan Gold™ and The Total EFA™ 100% Vegetarian with Lignans are primarily nutritional oil products, but also contain lignans.



FiProFLAX™ - 15 oz - Item #5025

- Approximately 150 mg lignans per serving
- All of the nutritional benefits of flaxseeds in a delicious, easy-to-digest form
- Organically grown seeds are specially cold-milled to ensure maximum retention of nutrients, easy digestibility and better nutrient absorption than with whole flaxseeds.
- Unlike the competitors, FiProFLAX™ is packaged in a vacuum-sealed pouch which helps to remove any oxygen present in the bag. This protects the oil from oxidation and rancidity and maintains the delicious nutty fresh taste of the seeds throughout its shelf-life.



Sprouted FiProFLAX™ - 16 oz - Item #6256

- Approximately 185 mg lignans per serving
- Organic, cold-milled flaxseed sprouted to unlock the nutrients within the seeds, making them more digestible and bioavailable to the body
- Sprouting reduces levels of enzyme inhibitors and phytic acid to help improve digestion and enhance the absorption of vitamins and minerals
- Sprouting increases product stability; not necessary to vacuum-seal or refrigerate prior to and even after opening
- Unique product in the marketplace
- Raw Food



Men's FiProFLAX™ - 15 oz - Item #5036

- Approximately 175 mg lignans per serving
- Organic cold milled flaxseeds with concentrated flax lignans, fortified with zinc and 25% pumpkin seed meal by weight
- This unique combination supplies the nutritional benefits of flaxseeds, plus nutrients with special benefits for prostate health



Super FiProFLAX™ - 15 oz - Item #5039

- Approximately 120 mg lignans per serving
- Original FiProFLAX™, uniquely combined with GMO-free fermented soy meal, beta-glucans, zinc, vitamin B6 and vitamin C
- Unique product in the marketplace
- Provides all of the nutritional benefits of regular FiProFLAX™ in an easy-to-digest form, plus the nutritional support of fermented soy; fermented soy is easier to digest and more bioavailable than non-fermented soy; contains isoflavones (phytoestrogens or plant estrogens that provide nutritive support for men and women).
- Contains beta-glucans, derived from the nutritional yeast used to ferment the soy
- Also contains zinc to nutritionally support the immune system
- Vitamins B6 and C help facilitate the metabolism of the essential fatty acids in the flax