

Appendix 7: Inquiry about Organic Sugars

In the period from April to November 2008 and in December 2009 I have sent 23 letters with the certificate of posting to the 16 companies in the column 1. In the letter I was asking about their particular product or products, shown in column 2, all of which contained organic sugar labelled as shown in column 3. In the letter I asked for the clarification about the type of sugar: the level of extraction, the colour and the amount of sugar. In column 4, 5, and 6 are their answers (information about the amount of sugar comes either from the label or from the producer after being asked, but in the first few letters I have not asked for this information). In the last column are presented various difficulties in my effort to get information from the producers.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Company	Product(s)	Labelling of Sugar	Type of Sugar	Colour of Sugar	Amount of Added Sugar	The Nature of Difficulty in the Obtaining of the Information
Venture Foods UK Ltd	Organica Chocolate Bars	Whole Cane Sugar	Unrefined	Light brown	Not asked.	
		Raw Cane Sugar	Refined	Light beige		
Walkers Shortbread Ltd	Duchy Highland Shortbread	Demerara Sugar	Raw cane sugar	Golden	23.7%	
The Booja-Booja Ltd	Chocolate Truffles	Cane Sugar	Refined	White	45% of chocolate	Not getting clear answer in their first reply.
Doves Farm	Wholewheat Digestives, Fruity Oat Biscuits	Sugar	Demerara - partially refined	Golden brown	18.2%	
Food Brands Group Ltd	Cruz Sparkling Fruit Drinks	Cane Sugar	Sugar from sugar beet	White	10 – 11%	Not getting clear answer in their first reply.

Tropical Wholefoods	Fruit & Cereal Health Bars	Sugar	Refined	White	0.54%	
Rocks Organic Ltd	Cordials, Squashes	Sugar	Partially refined	Light yellow/brown	27 – 50% in cordials, 38 – 46% in squashes	Not getting clear answer in their first reply.
Green & Black's Ltd	Chocolates	Raw Cane Sugar	Unrefined	Light tan	12.8% to 50.8%; mostly 40 – 50%	No reply on the first letter. Getting contradictory information.[5]
		Cane Sugar	No info	No info		
Kallo Foods Ltd	Chocolate Rice Cakes Thins	Cane Sugar	Refined crystalline	Beige	Not asked.	No reply on the first letter.
Lyme Regis Fine Foods Ltd	Marzipan	Raw Cane Sugar				No reply on two letters.
		Cane Sugar				
Montezuma's	Organic Chocolates	Sugar				No reply on two letters.
Whole Earth Foods	Sparkling Cola Drink	Sugar		White	Not asked.	No reply on the first letter.
Yeo Valley Organic	Fruit Yogurts	Sugar	Partially Refined	Light brown	Approx. 5%	No reply on the first letter.
Bio-familia AG,Switzerland	Swiss Oat Pillows	Sugar	Crystal Sugar (Sugar Beet)	White	10.5%	
Rachel's Dairy Ltd.	Fruit Yogurts	Organic Sugar				No reply on two letters.
Crazy Jack Organic	Marzipan	Raw Cane Sugar	Processed	Medium brown	75%	Not getting clear answer.

Summary of difficulties to obtain clear information about the type of sugar

1. As it can be seen after my first inquiry I had only received clear information only from five companies out of sixteen. This is only about 30% success rate!
2. After the first inquiry I had not received replies from seven companies out of sixteen. This is approximately 44%.
3. After sending the second inquiry to the above seven companies I still have not received any answer from three companies.
4. In four cases I had received unclear information and for that reason I had to ask for an additional clarification.
5. Getting contradictory information from Green & Black's

On the one side is their explanation which gives the impression that their sugar is whole/unrefined (italics mine):

“We use *raw* cane sugar in our products which has therefore only been through the sugar mill stage. The sugar crystals have a light tan colour and still *retain their minerals and vitamins of the sugar cane plant*. Sugar cane juice, when evaporated, makes many types of sugar. The differences between those sugars come about in the further processing or lack of it. The sugar we use is therefore *unrefined* and unbleached.”

On the other side is the nutritional information about their ‘raw cane sugar’ which shows it contains 99.5% sucrose which puts it in the category of highly refined sugars.

Summary of the types of organic sugar used in the products

1. Although in my inquiry I did not ask the producers how much sucrose is contained in the sugar they use (in that time I was not yet aware how deceiving are descriptions and colours of sugar), we can see that the sugars are predominantly refined, even highly refined.
2. Five sugars are white, three are whitish (light beige, beige, light tan), and three are the Demerara type of sugar which contain probably about 99.4% of sucrose. It might be that the rest are also similar types of sugar.
3. In fact, amongst all sugars used by the producers there is only one whole, unrefined sugar!