

EU approves use of Stevia in food and beverages

Reinach, Switzerland, 15 November 2011 – Evolva Holding SA (SIX: EVE) today announced that the European Commission has approved the use of steviol glycosides in food and beverages in the European Union ¹⁾. After the earlier clearance by regulators in the US and many other regions of the world, this marks a major breakthrough in the acceptance of Stevia as a natural, zero-calorie sweetener.

Evolva is rapidly advancing the development of highly purified forms of the natural high intensity sweetener Stevia, produced via fermentation in yeast. Evolva's research team has already successfully made the important individual steviol glycoside components of Stevia via fermentation in yeast. Evolva believes the ability to produce such molecules individually has significant market potential by allowing cost effective production of the best tasting steviol glycosides, including those found at very low levels in the Stevia leaf. This will allow our customers the ability to better customise taste profiles. Over the next year, the focus will be on optimising the production host and associated manufacturing conditions.

Neil Goldsmith, CEO and Managing Director of Evolva, commented: "This is important news for Evolva. It confirms and expands the potential of our Stevia-pipeline. We are working hard to develop Stevia compounds, equivalent to the plant-derived product, but made via fermentation in yeast. This approach confers major additional benefits in the form of a more reliable and scalable supply-chain, a better and more customisable taste profile and more attractive pricing. Combined these benefits will allow many more people around the world to enjoy the benefits that are inherent to Stevia"

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¹⁾ Commission regulation (EU) No 1131/2011 of 11 November 2011

About Evolva Holding SA

Evolva strives to improve people's lives by applying its technology and other resources to the discovery and development of new products and processes that benefit the health, well-being and financial economy of patients, consumers and partner companies around the world. Evolva uses biosynthetic and evolutionary technologies to create and optimise small molecule compounds and their production routes. Our approach differs from that of the mainstream in the pharmaceutical and chemical industries. We are active in pharmaceutical development

(infectious disease and complications of diabetes) as well as in consumer healthcare and nutrition (food ingredients, personal care and crop protection). We have partnered projects as well as proprietary programmes ongoing. More information: www.evolva.com.

About Stevia

Stevia is a leafy green plant (*Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni). It belongs to a genus of about 240 species of herbs and shrubs that are part of the sunflower family (Asteraceae) that are native to subtropical and tropical regions from western North America to South America. The species *Stevia rebaudiana*, commonly known as sweetleaf, sweet leaf, sugarleaf, or simply Stevia, is widely grown around the world today and its sweet leaves are used in a variety of forms as a high-intensity sweetener.

Stevia-based sweeteners are high-intensity sweeteners used today in dairy products, health drinks and carbonated and still beverages. With its steviol glycoside extracts having up to 300 times the sweetness of sugar, Stevia has garnered attention because of the rise in demand for low-carbohydrate, low-calorie, low-sugar food alternatives. Stevia does not raise blood glucose—meaning that the steviol glycosides responsible for Stevia’s sweet taste do not induce a glycaemic response when consumed—which makes it an appealing sweetener for individuals diagnosed with metabolic syndrome who have been advised to strictly adhere to a strict, carbohydrate-controlled diet.

Fermentation-derived steviol glycosides are individually produced and highly pure forms of the Stevia sweetener produced through fermentation rather than by refining of extracts from cultivated Stevia leaves. Fermentation is commonly used to produce a variety of food products ranging from wine to cheese.

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