

# Juice Gone Wild

## CONFUSION IN AISLE 10

BY JAYNE HURLEY & BONNIE LIEBMAN

Juice beats pop. That's no surprise. But the sky's no longer the limit even for nutrient-packed juices like orange. In 2006, a panel of experts recommended that most people drink no more than one cup (250 mL) of fruit juice a day (see June 2006, cover story).

Why? Because we don't compensate for the calories we get from liquids by eating less food later. So juices aren't good for the waistline. And they may raise the risk of diabetes (see Sept. 2008, cover story).

Maybe the bad press is one reason the juice aisle has gone wild. Labels are pushing everything from antioxidants and fibre to hydration and heart health. And companies are making juice lighter, more sparkling, more fortified...and more confusing.

Here's what's new.

Information compiled by Natalie Walsh and Namita Davis in Toronto.



### Lighten Up

"50% less sugar" and "45% less calories," boasts the PC Blue Menu Mango Orange Juice Beverage carton. That's because it's only 43 per cent mango purée and orange juice. The rest is water plus the safe sweetener sucralose. So one cup (250 mL) has just 70 calories.

Allen's Lifestyle Apple Cocktail slims down to 50 calories by adding water and sucralose. Tropicana Trop50 gets there with water and Reb A (Pure Via), a safe sweetener extracted from the stevia plant.

And some PC Blue Menu Cocktails (like Ruby Red Grapefruit and Cranberry) slash the calories to 30 or 40 per cup with sucralose. (The Pomegranate

Blueberry, Orange Tropical, Cranberry Raspberry, and Blackcurrant Pomegranate only get down to 50 to 70 calories, in part because they also add about a teaspoon of fructose per cup.)

Want no sweeteners? SunRype Light & Refreshing and V8 V-Fusion Light add only water to reach 90 calories per cup.

They all beat Fuze Shape and Ocean Spray Diet, which contain the poorly tested sweetener acesulfame-potassium, and Dole Sparklers Real Fruit Beverages, which also use the questionable sweetener aspartame.

How much juice is in your bottle? If the word "juice" is in the name, it could be anywhere from 25 to 100 per cent. If "juice" isn't in the name, it could be anywhere from 0 to 24 per cent. That's not too useful. Memo to Health Canada: Why not require all labels to list per cent juice?

Look for a light juice that uses a safe sweetener like sucralose or Reb A.

### Naturally Sly

How many calories are in Tropicana Trop50 Farmstand Apple, which has "50% LESS SUGAR AND CALORIES than the leading 100% Apple Juice," according to the front label? No problem. Just look for the Nutrition Facts panel on the back label.

Oops! It's missing.

The calories (50 per cup) are there, sandwiched between the "Medicinal Facts" and the "Non-Medicinal Ingredients." Medicinal Facts for apple juice? Yup. "Recommended Dose" as well ("Drink 1 cup 1 to 2 times daily").

You see, according to Health Canada, Trop50 Farmstand Apple isn't a regular food. It's a "natural health product in food format." So are Oasis NutriSource Wild Blueberry and Fuze Vitalize, Refresh, and Shape, among others. (You can tell because somewhere on the front label are the words "Natural Health Product" and/or a "NPN" or "EN" number.)

Why did those companies apply for a licence to sell their juices as natural health products? Our bet: so they could add vitamins and minerals (like A, E, some B's, and chromium) that Canadians don't need more of, and get a leg up on the competition by crowing about it on their labels. Juices can't do that.

And natural health products don't have to carry Nutrition Facts panels...or list calories...or tell you what per cent of a day's worth of vitamins have been added. Don't fall for them.



Juices that are "natural health products" are no better than other juices.



## Puttin' on the Spritz

Drinking sparkling juice to cut some calories? Check the Nutrition Facts panel first.

President's Choice 100% Sparkling Fruit Juices have around 130 calories per cup. That's no less than you'd get from pop.

They're made from mostly apple and/or grape juice. Ditto for R.W. Knudsen Spritzers, which drop to around 100 calories per cup. (Kudos to Knudsen for listing the percentage of each juice in its ingredients list and to both Knudsen and PC for disclosing the apple and grape on their front labels.)

To cut the calories, try a PC Blue Menu Sparkling Fruit Juice Beverage. As usual, they have more apple and/or grape juice than the juices featured in the name (Peach Mango, Pomegranate Cranberry, Kiwi Berry). But added water trims a 250 mL can to just 60 calories. Dole Sparklers Real Fruit Beverages (mostly pear juice) have 70 calories per 355 mL can, but the company uses the poorly tested artificial sweeteners aspartame and acesulfame-potassium.

Of course, you could always add seltzer to nutrient-rich orange juice. Voilà! Half the calories, not too sweet, and better for you than gussied up grape, apple, and pear juices.

Many sparkling juices have no fewer calories than regular juice...or pop.



## Playing Hearts

"Plant sterols help lower cholesterol," says the Minute Maid Heart Wise carton.

It's not lying. A cup of Heart Wise has one gram of plant sterols. Two grams a day can lower LDL ("bad") cholesterol by roughly 10 per cent.

Every cup of Oasis Health Break CholestPrevent juice also has one gram of plant sterols. Just don't kid yourself into thinking that you'll be getting much orange or cranberry in the "Orange, Mango and Cranberry" juice. While mango purée is the first ingredient after water, the carton contains more apple and/or grape juice than orange or cranberry.

Minute Maid's plant sterols can help lower your cholesterol.

While mango purée is the first ingredient after water, the carton contains more apple and/or grape juice than orange or cranberry.

## Coconut What?

Coconut *milk* (which is loaded with saturated fat and calories) comes from squeezing grated coconut meat. Coconut *water* is the liquid that pours out when you crack open a young green coconut. It has roughly 40 calories per cup and zero fat. Its claim to fame: hydration.

"More electrolytes than leading sports drinks with 15 times the potassium," claims the label of Vita Coco, which is imported from Brazil. "It's okay if you're not a marathon runner, a football player or a Tour de France winner," adds the Web site. "Life is hectic enough, and you should be hydrated while you live it."

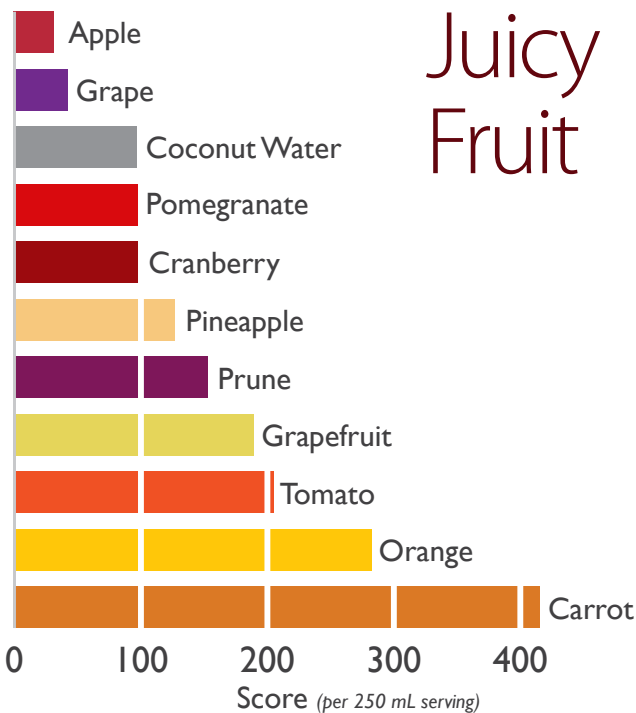
Hello? Any beverage hydrates you. The only time you might need electrolytes—like sodium or potassium—is after hours of vigorous exercise. Marathon runners who drink too much plain water can dilute their sodium levels enough to cause cardiac arrest. A hectic life won't do that.

That said, coconut water's potassium (300 to 500 milligrams per cup) is a real asset. Most people don't get anywhere near the daily target (4,700 mg) that can help lower blood pressure. But unless you've been sweating for hours, hydrate with water.



Most people can hydrate perfectly well with water.

## Juicy Fruit



**Not all juices are equal.** We calculated scores based on the levels of 12 vitamins, minerals, and carotenoids, plus fibre. (We left out juices like blueberry and açai because numbers for some of their nutrients aren't available.) Carrot juice leads the pack because it's so rich in vitamin A (and it packs a nice potassium punch as well).

A few caveats: Tomato juice is high in salt unless the label says "low sodium." And our score reflects nutrient levels in pure cranberry juice, even though it's rarely sold without other juices or sweetened water mixed in.

And keep in mind that calories vary. A 250 mL glass of apple, blueberry, carrot, cranberry, grapefruit, orange, or pineapple juice has 100 to 130 calories, while a glass of grape, pomegranate, or prune juice has 150 to 180.

These days, much of what you hear about juices goes beyond vitamins and minerals. A future article will look at whether blueberry, grape, pomegranate, tart cherry, or other juices (or fruit) can improve health.

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## Claims to Ignore

When will bogus claims stop? When the Canadian Food Inspection Agency starts cracking down and when juice makers decide to stop raking in the easy dough. In other words, probably not anytime soon. Here are a few examples:

**Checkmate.** Ocean Spray Cranberry Pomegranate Cherry 100% Juice Blend must be better for you than other juices. Why else would the bottle carry a “Health Check” symbol from the Heart & Stroke Foundation? Ditto for Oasis Classic Berry Fusion 100% Pure Juice, whose label sports a “Health Signature” checkmark.

It turns out that both are just run-of-the-mill juices. In fact, the Ocean Spray has more grape and apple juice, and the Oasis has more apple, grape, and pear, than the more expensive juices in the names and pictures on the labels.

Any 100 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar and some nutrients (50 per cent of a day’s vitamin C, or 25 per cent of a day’s vitamin A or folate, or 2 grams of fibre per serving) would qualify for a Heart & Stroke Foundation Health Check...provided the manufacturer paid the foundation’s fee.

The criteria for Oasis’s Health Signature checkmark are no tougher. That’s probably also true for juices that are packaged as PC Blue Menu (instead of President’s Choice) or Compliments Balance (instead of Compliments), though neither company would give us its specific criteria. Assume it’s all just marketing.

**Fibre.** “High Source of Fibre,” says the V8 V-Plus High Fibre and Low Sodium label.

Maybe, but roughly half of the 4 grams of fibre in a one-cup (250 mL) serving comes from inulin, a powder typically extracted from chicory root. Inulin is considered a fibre because humans lack the enzymes that break it down. In the few decent studies that looked at inulin alone, it had no consistent effect on regularity. And there’s no good evidence that it has any of fibre’s other benefits.

That also applies to the inulin in Oasis Health Break Fibre, Oasis NutriSource Fibre, and other foods that add inulin to justify their fibre claims. Only prune juice hits 4 grams of fibre without outside help.

**DHA.** Oasis adds enough DHA and EPA from anchovies and sardines to its Health Break Omega-3 and NutriSource Omega-3 (mostly apple, grape, or pear) juices to provide a smidgen (0.1 gram) to each cup. That’s a fraction of the 1,000 to 3,500 mg you’d get in 6 oz. of salmon. (DHA and EPA are the two main omega-3 fats in fish oil.)

Then it tosses in a misleading, needs-no-evidence claim (DHA “supports the normal development of the brain, eyes and nerves”). PC Blue Menu Oh Mega J does much the same.

What’s the harm? Adults worried about their memories and children whose parents are worried about brain development are drinking juice they’d be better off without.



## Serving Size Scams

“2 servings of fruits & veggies per 250 mL,” says the bottle of SunRype Fruit Plus Veggies. V8 V-Fusion, Oasis Fruits Etc., and Wholesome Goodness 100% Juice Blend make similar claims.

How do juice makers squeeze two servings of fruit (and/or vegetables) into one 250 mL glass? Simple. They use *Canada’s Food Guide’s* serving size for juice, fruit, or vegetables, which is 125 mL (½ cup).

So a 250 mL glass of any 100 per cent juice is two servings. Blame it on the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, which recommends that companies give calories and other Nutrition Facts for a 250 mL serving but doesn’t stop them when they claim that 250 mL is two servings of fruit or vegetables.

Another serving-size trick: POM Wonderful has just 150 calories, according to the Nutrition Facts panel. But that’s for a 236 mL serving, which is half the bottle. Drink the whole thing—it’s not very big—and you’ll end up with 300 calories.

Minute Maid Cocktails and SoBe Energize use the same ruse. Other brands—like Dole Sparklers and R.W. Knudsen Spritzers—give Nutrition Facts for the entire bottle or can. And Fuze lists calories for the whole bottle.



A cup of juice is two servings of fruit or vegetables, says the government.

## Why Water

If you’re trying to cut back on juice’s calories, sucralose-sweetened Aquafina FlavourSplash or an unsweetened flavoured seltzer or water (like Nestlé Pure Life Sparkling, PC Blue Menu Seltzer, or Perrier) may help you switch.

Just watch out for flavoured waters (Nestlé Pure Life Splash, President’s Choice Free & Clear, and President’s Choice Mist, for example) that add sucralose plus the poorly tested artificial sweetener acesulfame-potassium.

Experts recommend two to six (250 mL) cups of water a day (along with up to five cups of unsweetened coffee or tea and up to two cups of low-fat milk or soy milk). Our advice: make it tap water. That’s what’s in many bottled waters anyway.

Help cut down on the millions of plastic water bottles that clog landfills. More than 85 per cent of all empty water bottles aren’t recycled, according to the David Suzuki Foundation. And the oil that goes into making, shipping, and refrigerating bottles of water doesn’t do the planet any favours. 🍷



Fruit-flavoured water may help you cut back on juice, but tap water is better for the planet.

# Juice for Grins

We awarded no Best Bites because fruit is healthier than juice. Worst Bites (✗) contain added sugar and/or the poorly tested artificial sweeteners acesulfame-potassium or aspartame. Within each section, juices are ranked from least to most calories, then most to least per cent juice. (Juices with sodium are ranked from least to most sodium first.)

## 100% JUICE BLENDS—MULTI SERVE (per 250 mL serving)

	% Juice	Calories
Oasis Classic Exotic Mango 100% Pure Juice	100	100
Oasis Classic Berry Fusion 100% Pure Juice	100	110
Ceres 100% Fruit Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	120
Oasis Health Break <sup>1R</sup>	100	120
Oasis NutriSource 100% Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	120
Compliments Balance Pure Fruit Juices <sup>1R</sup>	100	130
President's Choice 100% Juice & Purée <sup>1R</sup>	100	130
R.W. Knudsen Organic—Açai, Blueberry Pomegranate, or Cranberry Pomegranate <sup>1</sup>	100	130
SunRype 100% Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	130
Tropicana 100% Juice <sup>1R</sup>	100	130
Tropicana Tropics <sup>1R</sup>	100	130
Bom Dia Açai, Original or with Pomegranate <sup>1R</sup>	100	140
Compliments Balance Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	140
PC Organics Sparkling Juice Beverage <sup>1</sup>	100	140
President's Choice 100% Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	140
R.W. Knudsen Just Juice, Black Cherry or Blueberry <sup>1</sup>	100	140
Bolthouse Farms Passion Orange Guava <sup>R</sup>	100	150
Compliments 100% Juice, Cranberry or Cranberry & Concord Grape <sup>1</sup>	100	150
Just Juice—Field Berries, Sweet Cherry, or Wild Blueberry <sup>1</sup>	100	150
Ocean Spray 100% Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	150
Bolthouse Farms C-Boost <sup>R</sup>	100	160
Bolthouse Farms Blue Goodness <sup>R</sup>	100	170

## JUICE WITH ADDED WATER—MULTI SERVE (per 250 mL serving)

SunRype Light & Refreshing <sup>1</sup>	75	90
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## JUICE WITH LOW-CALORIE SWEETENER—MULTI SERVE

(per 250 mL serving)

✗ Ocean Spray Diet <sup>1</sup>	5	10
PC Blue Menu Cocktail, Cranberry or Ruby Red Grapefruit <sup>1</sup>	28*	40
✗ Ocean Spray Low Calorie Cranberry Cocktail	27	40
✗ Compliments Light Cranberry Cocktail	25*	40
✗ Ocean Spray Low Calorie Cocktail, Cran-Pomegranate or Cran-Raspberry <sup>1</sup>	15	40
Ocean Spray Low Calorie Cran-Grape Cocktail	15	40
Tropicana Trop50 <sup>1R</sup>	42	50
Allen's Lifestyle Apple Cocktail	NA	50
✗ PC Blue Menu Cocktail—Blackcurrant Pomegranate, Cranberry Raspberry, Orange Tropical, or Pomegranate Blueberry <sup>1</sup>	28*	60
✗ SunnyD <sup>1</sup>	5	60
PC Blue Menu Mango Orange Juice Beverage <sup>R</sup>	43*	70

## JUICE WITH ADDED SUGAR—MULTI SERVE (per 250 mL serving)

✗ Orangina	12	110
✗ Allen's Cocktail—Apple Juice, Apple-Peach, or Peach <sup>1</sup>	NA	110
✗ Allen's Fruit Punch	NA	110
✗ Fruitopia <sup>1R</sup>	NA	110
✗ Five Alive <sup>1R</sup>	40*	120
✗ Compliments Citrus Five <sup>R</sup>	25*	120
✗ Odwalla Pomalicious Pomegranate Limeade <sup>R</sup>	20	120
✗ Ocean Spray Cocktail <sup>1</sup>	16	120

	% Juice	Calories
✗ Bolthouse Farms Mango Lemonade <sup>R</sup>	15	130
✗ Compliments Fruit Fusion <sup>1R</sup>	8*	130
✗ Compliments Cranberry Juice Cocktail <sup>R</sup>	25	140
✗ PC Organics Cocktail <sup>1</sup>	25*	140
✗ Rubicon Exotic Juice Drink <sup>1</sup>	25*	140
✗ President's Choice Cocktail <sup>1</sup>	28*	150
✗ Compliments Cocktail <sup>1</sup>	25*	150
✗ Tropicana Cranberry Cocktail <sup>1R</sup>	NA	150

## 100% JUICE BLENDS—SINGLE SERVE

President's Choice 100% Sparkling Fruit Juice (250 mL) <sup>1</sup>	100	130
POM Wonderful (473 mL) <sup>1R</sup>	100	300

## JUICE WITH ADDED WATER—SINGLE SERVE

PC Blue Menu Sparkling Fruit Juice Beverage (250 mL) <sup>1</sup>	50	60
R.W. Knudsen Spritzer (311 mL) <sup>1</sup>	60	120

## JUICE WITH LOW-CALORIE SWEETENER—SINGLE SERVE

✗ Fuze Shape (547 mL) <sup>1</sup>	5	20
✗ Dole Sparklers Real Fruit Beverage (355 mL) <sup>1</sup>	NA	70
✗ Fuze Refresh (547 mL) <sup>1</sup>	5	210

## JUICE WITH ADDED SUGAR—SINGLE SERVE

✗ Minute Maid Cocktail (450 mL) <sup>1</sup>	NA	220
✗ Fuze Vitalize Orange Mango (547 mL)	5	230
✗ SoBe Energize Mango Melon (591 mL)	NA	280

## COCONUT WATER—SINGLE SERVE UNLESS NOTED

Vita Coco, 100% Pure, multi serve (250 mL)	100	50
Zico, except Chocolate (414 mL) <sup>1</sup>	100	60
✗ Zico Chocolate (414 mL)	NA	110
Vita Coco, except 100% Pure (500 mL) <sup>1</sup>	100*	120

## WATER (500 mL unless noted)

✗ Nestlé Pure Life Splash, President's Choice Free & Clear, or President's Choice Mist <sup>1</sup>	0	0
Unsweetened flavoured, any brand	0	0
Aquafina FlavourSplash (591 mL) <sup>1</sup>	0	10

## VEGETABLE OR FRUIT & VEGETABLE BLEND

(per 250 mL serving)

	% Juice	Calories	Sodium (mg)
Oasis Fruits Etc. <sup>1</sup>	100	110	20
Bolthouse Farms Green Goodness <sup>R</sup>	100	150	30
Wholesome Goodness 100% Juice—Peach Mango, Pomegranate Blueberry, or Strawberry Banana <sup>1</sup>	100	120	40
V8 V-Fusion, Peach Mango or Strawberry Banana <sup>1</sup>	100	120	50
Compliments Balance 100% Fruit & Vegetable Juice <sup>1</sup>	100	120	60
V8 V-Fusion Light, Peach Mango or Strawberry Banana <sup>1</sup>	75	90	70
SunRype Fruit Plus Veggies <sup>1</sup>	100	120	70
V8 Low Sodium	100	50	140
✗ Mott's Low Sodium Garden Cocktail	NA	50	140
V8 V-Plus High Fibre and Low Sodium	100	60	140
✗ Compliments Balance Garden Vegetable Cocktail	NA	60	350
V8 Smooth & Seasoned	99	60	450
V8 Original	100	50	480
President's Choice 8 Vegetable Cocktail	100	60	480
✗ Compliments Garden Vegetable Cocktail	NA	50	600
✗ Mott's Original Garden Cocktail	NA	60	650

✗ Worst Bite. <sup>1</sup> Average of the entire line. <sup>R</sup> Refrigerated.

\* Estimate. NA Number not available.

**Daily Value** (daily limit for a 2,000-calorie diet): **Sodium:** 1,500 milligrams.

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