

Featuring Salba Smart in June
2009 issue of *California Focus*.
Circulation: Print: 5,000

Salba - A Novel Grain That Boosts Nutrition by Dave Zuchowski



If you're looking to upgrade your nutritional intake, you might be interested in Salba, a novel grain that's been used as a food for as long as 5,500 years but is still relatively unknown in the United States.

Grown largely in South America and especially in Peru, where it does particularly well, researchers started growing *Salvia hispanica* L. (Salba) in experimental plots in Argentina in 1991. During 15 years of research, growers discovered different variations of the grain, but, by segregating flowers and plants, they were able to isolate pure varieties that were consistently high in nutritional values. These are the only patented, registered, and trademarked varieties in the world.

A look at the claims made by Salba marketing is quite astonishing. Called a super grain, Salba is said to be higher in Omega 3 fatty acids than flax or salmon, higher in fiber than All-Bran, higher in iron than spinach, higher in calcium than milk and, gram for gram, higher in antioxidants than pomegranates or blueberries, which help prevent cancer.

For people afflicted with Type 2 diabetes, Salba is said to improve cardiovascular risk factors. This claim is reiterated by Rally Ralston, managing partner of Salba Smart, a company that produces organic food products using Salba as an ingredient, who said the topic has a published research paper by the University of Toronto's St. Michael's Medical Center in Diabetes Care, which discovered insulin and developed the glycemic index.

In 2006, Ralston and his brother, Richard, joined Salba growers in South America to form Salba Smart, a company that imports the grain to the United States from Peru and produces a number of Salba value added products such as

salsas, organic corn chips, pretzels and tortillas.

"Currently, we're getting ready to launch an all-natural baked potato/Salba crisp that will come in three different flavors," said Ralston. "Each package will have about 120 calories and 300 mg of Omega 3 essential fatty acids per 1 ounce serving."

Consumers can also purchase Salba seed in 6.4 and 12.7 ounce packages. The seed can be sprinkled on cereals and salads and used in pancakes, smoothies, soups and sauces.

One tablespoon of Salba Whole seed or two tablespoons of Premium Ground seed contains 2,470 mg of Omega 3 fatty acids, and, gram for gram, Salba has 30% more antioxidants than blueberries," said Ralston. "People who consume one tablespoon of Salba Whole seed or two tablespoons of Premium Ground seed a day for three consecutive days should begin to see improvement in their bodily functions. I myself notice an increase of energy among the many attributes."

Those wanting to curb their appetite might want to consider Salba Smart Organic Tortilla Chips. According to Ralston, 100 calorie Salba Smart tortilla chip packages should have the consumer feeling full and satisfied fifteen minutes after finishing them.

Locally, Salba Smart products are sold at Whole Food Markets and the East End Food Co-op in Pittsburgh, and consumers can also order them online at amazon.com and efoodpantry.com.

"If your favorite natural food store doesn't carry our Salba Smart products, consumers might suggest they order them for their inventory," said Ralston.

For more information on Salba Smart, log on to www.salbasmart.com.