PRACTICE Greenhealth

Suggested Environmental Considerations for Beverages (Non-Dairy)

(Dairy Beverages - please refer to the Dairy resource for questions on milk based beverages)

The suggested environmental disclosure questions may be used in your RFI/RFP to help inform your purchasing decisions.

#	Environmental Questions	Preferred Answer	Definition	Rationale
1.	Is this product or any product ingredients USDA certified organic or Food Alliance Certified? (Yes/No)	Yes	**Certified USDA Organic** - Product must meet the federal organic standards as determined by a USDA-approved certifying agency. Organic products are produced without synthetic pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics or added hormones. **Food Alliance certification** ensures that farmers/producers use safe and fair working conditions, humane livestock handling practices, cannot use hormones or non-therapeutic antibiotics, cannot use or produce GMOs, reduce pesticide use, implement water and soil conservation and habitat protection practices	Ingredients may have been produced with synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics, or added hormones (organic certification would avoid this). Grains/legumes, dairy, eggs, and produce may have been produced utilizing unfair labor/working conditions. Animal welfare may not have been taken into consideration and high levels of toxic pesticides and fertilizers may have been used to produce these foods. Products with grains, corn, soy and canola may be genetically engineered. Farming practices may be wasteful or harmful to water, soil and habitat health (Food Alliance certification would avoid this) These two certifications are slightly different yet we did not want one to cancel the other by asking two separate questions. While not impossible, generally no producer would ever have both certifications in part because they do have some overlap in what they cover.
3	Is this product produced **without** genetically modified ingredients? (Yes/No)	Yes	This product was not made with ingredients from genetically engineered/modified (GE/GM) ingredients.	Beverages that contain corn, soy, canola and their derivatives (e.g., oil, **high fructose corn syrup**, corn meal, soy protein, etc) may have been produced from GMO seeds. Prefer products labeled "No genetically engineered ingredients." GMO containing foods or ingredients are not adequately assessed for their credible adverse effects on human or animal health, or on the environment in which they are produced. Also of concern is the threat posed by genetic engineering to environmentally sustainable food production and the threat to the economic

				livelihood of farmers pursing sustainable food production. See related fact sheet: http://www.noharm.org/lib/downloads/food/Genetic_Engineered_Food_Stmnt.pdf
4.	Is this product free of artificial dyes or flavorings? (Yes/No)	Yes	Artificial additives are used to enhance or alter the color or flavor (including sweetness) of food. A sweetener is considered a sugar substitute which is a food additive that duplicates the effect of sugar in taste, usually with less food energy. Some sugar substitutes are natural and some are synthetic. Those that are not natural are, in general, called artificial sweeteners. In the United States, six intensely-sweet sugar substitutes have been approved for use. They are stevia, aspartame, sucralose, neotame, acesulfame potassium, and saccharin.[i]	Beverages may contain artificial food dyes (such as Yellow 6, Green 3, Blue 2) or flavorings (including artificial sweeteners). Some of these additives raise health concerns. Prefer products that do not contain ingredients from the "Avoid List" put out by Center for Science in the Public Interest. View the Avoid list and learn more about specific additives and related concerns here: http://www.cspinet.org/reports/chemcuisine.htm
5.	Is this product certified (such as Fair Trade Certified) to come from farms that use safe working conditions, offer fair wages and working conditions and not exploit child labor? (Yes/No) (will mostly apply to coffee/tea)	Yes	Fair Trade Certified ensures products come from farms that have not exploited child labor, provide safe working conditions and fair wages. Products also do not contain genetically modified ingredients and no hazardous chemicals.	Coffee and tea which typically come from international markets may have been produced with the use of child labor, unsafe working conditions, and unfair wages. For more information on Fair Trade, see http://fairtradeusa.org/sites/all/files/wysiwyg/filemanager/standards/FTUSA__Principles.pdf
6.	? Is this product free of added sugars? (Yes/No)	Yes	Added Sugars may include:high-fructose corn syrup, cane sugar, beet sugar, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, glucose, sucrose, honey, brown sugar, dextrose, corn sweetener, agave nectar.	Added sugars like high fructose corn syrup and beet sugar may be genetically modified. See above for more information on GE/GMO crops. A significant amount of crop land in the United States is dedicated to producing sweeteners for beverages and processed foods. These crops, when grown conventionally, use a significant amount of chemical inputs that contribute to air, land, water and human health degradation. Additionally, consuming excessive or high amounts of food with added sugars is associated with a number of human health concerns such as higher rates of obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type II Diabetes.

				For more information on Healthy Beverages refer to: http://www.noharm.org/lib/downloads/food/Hydrate_For_Health.pdf

Packaging Questions

Include the following questions for packaged products

#	Environmental Questions	Preferred Answer	Definition	Rationale
1.	Is this product's package recyclable? (Yes/No)	Yes	Any claims of recyclability indicates the supplier can demonstrate that at least 60% of the hospitals in the U.S., or in the product distribution area, have access to an established recycling program for this item, or there is an existing take-back program by the vendor of the manufacturer that has been in operation at least one year and covers the indicated percentage of hospitals and will recycle the product.	Recyclable products, those that are recyclable in communities in the U.S., reduce materials going to the waste stream and their associated costs. Although FTC has not finalized definitions to prove this claim, we are utilizing the FTC draft definition for 'substantial majority' to mean at least 60% and adding what it means to the health care community to ensure the needs of facilities who strive to divert materials from their waste stream.
2.	Is this product packaged in a container free of intentionally added Bisphenol A? (Yes/No)	Yes	Bis(4-hydroxyphenyl)propane, or Bisphenol A (BPA), is an organic compound used to make polycarbonate plastic, epoxy resins and for other applications. Polycarbonate plastic is derived from BPA. Resin derived from BPA is used to line metal food and drink containers and in thermal paper for impact printing purposes. Intentionally added means a substance is deliberately added in the production of the product.	People can be exposed through the use of products containing these chemicals. BPA is one of the highest volume chemicals produced worldwide. Laboratory studies have shown widespread health effects, at least in part through endocrine disruption mechanisms. The National Toxicology Program has some concern for the effects on the brain, behavior, and prostate gland in fetuses, infants, and children at current human exposures to Bisphenol A.
3.	Can this product be purchased in bulk (or fountain) form? (Yes/No)	Yes	Products in bulk could come in larger packaging sizes and/or have the capability of being dispensed in soda fountain form.	Purchasing products in bulk form (rather than individual servings) cuts down on waste and also enables the facility to serve healthier portion sizes of particular products.

Practice Greenhealth thanks its EPP Supporters for their contributions to the creation of this resource.

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[i] *Sugar Substitute*, Wikipedia, accessed February 3, 2012