

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Issues No Objection Letter to GRAS Status of Rebaudioside A

***All-Natural Zero-Calorie PureVia™ Tabletop Sweetener Begins Shipping to Retailers;
PureVia™ Makes its U.S. Debut in Zero-Calorie SoBe Lifewater®, and Trop50, a
New Light Orange Juice Product from Tropicana in First Quarter 2009***

CHICAGO and PURCHASE, N.Y. – December 17, 2008 – Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC and PepsiCo announced today that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a no objection letter with respect to Rebaudioside A (Reb A), the stevia extract used in *PureVia™*, the companies' all-natural, zero-calorie sweetener.

This response indicates the FDA has no objection to the conclusion that Reb A is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) among qualified experts for use in beverages, foods and tabletop sweeteners. It also makes possible the launch of *PureVia™* tabletop sweetener, zero-calorie SoBe Lifewater and Trop50, Tropicana's new light orange juice product. This news will be sweet music to the ears – and waistlines – of U.S. consumers looking for more natural, low-calorie choices.

PureVia™ Tabletop Sweetener Hits Store Shelves

Whole Earth Sweetener Company has begun shipping *PureVia™*, an all-natural, zero-calorie alternative to sugar that can be used in both hot and cold beverages, as well as sprinkled on cereal, fruit and yogurt. It will be available for purchase in the sweetener aisle at grocery and mass merchandise stores across the United States. It will be offered in 40- and 80-stick cartons for a suggested retail price of \$3.99 and \$6.99, respectively. Retail prices may vary by market. Consumers can also look for it in the sweetener caddy at coffee shops and restaurants.

“We are delighted to bring *PureVia™* to consumers,” said Paul Block, chief executive officer of Merisant and Whole Earth Sweetener Company. “*PureVia™* is the result of innovative technology that isolates 97 percent pure Reb A, the sweetest and best tasting part of the stevia leaf. We blend Reb A with other natural flavors and ingredients to create a great tasting, all-natural, zero-calorie sweetener with a similar taste and texture to sugar.”

For more information on PureVia, please visit www.purevia.com.

PepsiCo Launches New Zero-Calorie SoBe Lifewater and Trop50, a New Light Orange Juice Product with PureVia™

PepsiCo will launch two new products featuring *PureVia™*. Zero-calorie SoBe Lifewater, a great-tasting line of naturally-sweetened, enhanced waters will hit store shelves soon in

three flavors: Black and Blue Berry, Fuji Apple Pear and Yumberry Pomegranate. Tropicana will introduce Trop50, a light orange juice product with 50 percent less sugar and calories using *PureVia*TM in March. This beverage appeals to consumers who want the goodness of orange juice, while limiting their sugar and calorie intake.

“For consumers who are demanding more natural foods and beverages and counting calories but don’t want to compromise on taste, *PureVia*TM hits the sweet spot,” said Massimo d’Amore, chief executive officer of PepsiCo Americas Beverages. “The new flavors of SoBe Lifewater and Trop50 will continue the transformation of our product portfolio into a wider variety of healthy products, and we also believe they can help revitalize interest in our North American beverage business.”

FDA’s Response Marks First GRAS Status for Stevia Sweetener

The new products are coming to U.S. store shelves as a result of the FDA’s issuance of a no objection letter with respect to Reb A. The FDA issued its no objection letter after reviewing Whole Earth Sweetener Company’s notification and supporting scientific data that this highly pure plant extract is generally recognized as safe (GRAS) among qualified experts for use in beverages, foods and tabletop sweeteners. This is the first time that the FDA has issued a no objection letter on the GRAS status of any extract of the stevia plant.

*PureVia*TM is made from Reb A – a natural sweetener found in stevia, a plant native to Paraguay, and is 200 times sweeter than sugar. Whole Earth Sweetener Company and PepsiCo use a highly pure form of this natural sweetener in tabletop sweeteners, foods and beverages. This ingredient differs from most stevia products sold as dietary supplements in the United States because it is a highly pure form of only one of several steviol glycosides found in the stevia plant.

In May, Whole Earth Sweetener Company submitted a notification and supporting scientific data to the FDA demonstrating that Reb A is generally recognized as safe for use in beverages, foods and tabletop sweeteners. The company assembled a panel of internationally recognized experts to review all available safety information on Reb A. The panel confirmed that Reb A is safe to use as a tabletop sweetener and as an ingredient in beverages and foods. In preparing its notification to the FDA, Whole Earth Sweetener Company followed procedures that require the same quantity and quality of scientific evidence as is required to obtain approval of a substance as a food additive.

To launch *PureVia*TM, Whole Earth Sweetener Company, PepsiCo and PureCircle formed an unprecedented marketing and supply partnership. It unites Whole Earth Sweetener Company’s knowledge of natural sweeteners, Merisant’s global distribution network, PepsiCo’s global brand and marketing expertise and vast food and beverage portfolio with PureCircle’s leading supply capability, delivering a powerful platform to build awareness and trial. PureCircle will also have the exclusive license to market Reb A under the *PureVia*TM brand.

About Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC

Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC is committed to providing natural alternatives to sugar and to helping people eat better and live healthier, more fulfilling lives. Formed in 2006, Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC launched its first sweetener brand, *Sweet Simplicity*®, in 2007, and the company continues to develop a vertically integrated business that will bring products that are perfectly natural and naturally pure from the farm to consumers. Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Merisant Company, the maker of *Equal*® and *Canderel*® and a global leader in the manufacture, marketing and distribution of tabletop sweeteners, with sales in over 100 countries. For more information, visit www.wholeearthsweetener.com.

About PepsiCo

PepsiCo (NYSE: PEP) is one of the world's largest food and beverage companies, with 2007 annual revenues of more than \$39 billion. The company employs approximately 185,000 people worldwide, and its products are sold in approximately 200 countries. Its principal businesses include: Frito-Lay snacks, Pepsi-Cola beverages, Gatorade sports drinks, Tropicana juices and Quaker foods. The PepsiCo portfolio includes 18 brands that generate \$1 billion or more each in annual retail sales. PepsiCo's commitment to sustainable growth, defined as Performance with Purpose, is focused on generating healthy financial returns while giving back to communities the company serves. This includes meeting consumer needs for a spectrum of convenient foods and beverages, reducing the company's impact on the environment through water, energy and packaging initiatives, and supporting its employees through a diverse and inclusive culture that recruits and retains world-class talent. As a member of the Dow Jones Sustainability World Index (DJSI World) and the Dow Jones Sustainability North America Index (DJSI North America), PepsiCo is a recognized leader in sustainability. For more information, please visit www.pepsico.com.

About PureCircle

PureCircle (LSE:PURE) is the world's leading producer of high purity Rebaudioside-A (Reb A*), with a vertically integrated supply chain operating in three continents. PureCircle markets a range of natural sweeteners internationally. Activities range from the sourcing of dry stevia leaves and extraction, refining of Reb-A into sweeteners and marketing of these sweeteners to food and beverage manufacturers worldwide.

PureCircle's extraction plant can produce 1,000MT of stevia extract annually which is currently the world's largest extraction facility.

This is set to increase to 4,000 MT in March 2009. The Company has built the world's largest state-of-the-art refining plant in Malaysia. This currently produces 1,000MT of high purity Reb-A and work has started to double this capacity to 2,000MT. The Company's production facilities operate in compliance with cGMP, HACCP and ISO standards.

PureCircle's investment in research and development has given it a leadership position in the manufacture of high-purity Reb-A, and their scientists are globally recognised experts in their field.

The Company works with independent farmers in Thailand, China, Paraguay, Laos and Kenya to grow the best quality stevia leaf. PureCircle works closely with communities in each of these countries and endeavours to maximise the social, economic and environmental benefits of its operations.

PureCircle's corporate offices are located in Florham, New Jersey USA; Asuncion, Paraguay; Geneva, Switzerland; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Ganzhou, China and Kericho, Kenya.

PureCircle is listed on the London Stock Exchange AIM market under the ticker symbol: PURE

For more information on PureCircle visit: www.purecircle.com

Note to editors: *PureVia*[™] is a trademark of Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC and PepsiCo, Inc. *Sweet Simplicity*® is a registered trademark of Whole Earth Sweetener Company LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Merisant Company. *Equal*® and *Canderel*® are registered trademarks of Merisant Company and Merisant Company 2 Sarl. SoBe Lifewater® is a registered trademark of South Beach Beverage Company, Inc.

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