



NOCHEZTLI, informativo electrónico

GRUPO DE TRABAJO EN COCHINILLA, CACTUSNET-FAO/ONU

Nocheztli 29.08.08

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Introducción

Estimada comunidad del Grupo de Trabajo en Cochinilla, la edición del presente informativo electrónico Nocheztli, viene con excelentes noticias para el tema que nos apasiona. Una de ellas es el empuje del precio de la grana cochinilla, otra es la demanda de la misma, que se aumentará por motivo de la prohibición de colorantes sintéticos en el Reino Unido para 2009. Otra noticia es que en noviembre de este año, nos reuniremos en el IV Congreso Internacional de Grana Cochinilla y Colorantes Naturales en Texcoco, México, dentro del cual vamos a abordar los avances en la elaboración del Libro titulado “Conocimiento y Aprovechamiento de la Grana Cochinilla”. También se tratarán varias propuestas de colaboración por parte de diversos integrantes del GTC. Por todo lo anterior, la emoción se potencia gratamente.

Les recuerdo que sus comunicaciones que deseen compartir, los pueden enviar al correo cochinilla@cucba.udg.mx si es que ya están registrados en la lista de servicio, o de manera directa a portillo@cencar.udg.mx. Sus contribuciones son la base del informativo electrónico Nocheztli.

Reciban un muy atento saludo,

Liberato Portillo

Coordinador Internacional del Grupo de Trabajo en Cochinilla



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Contribuciones

Con agrado recibimos la noticia que el Presidente de México, Dr. Felipe Calderón, inauguró una Exposición de Proyectos Productivos, en los invernaderos de cría intensiva de grana cochinilla de la empresa Campo Carmín. La actividad tuvo lugar el lunes 10 de marzo del año en curso en Chiconcuac, en el estado de Morelos, México.



En la imagen el Presidente Calderón recorre uno de los invernaderos de Campo Carmín, lo acompaña Araceli Escalante Loza, Presidenta del Proyecto de Producción de Grana cochinilla.

La Presidencia de la República Mexicana tiene registrado el evento en el sitio de internet: <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/buscador/?contenido=34258>. La galería de fotos se puede ver en: http://galeria.calderon.presidencia.gob.mx/main.php?g2_itemId=13354.

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Candice Novak, reportera del U.S. News & World Report, estuvo en julio pasado investigado sobre la producción y otros aspectos relacionados con la grana cochinilla, impulsada por el aviso de prohibición de algunos colorantes sintéticos por parte del Reino Unido, que se ejecutará a partir de 2009. Una de las primeras preguntas que hizo, fue la preocupación de saber que se necesitaría mayor cantidad de grana cochinilla y que si esto no afectaría a las poblaciones del insecto. Luego de saber como estaba la situación de la cría de la grana cochinilla a nivel mundial, estuvo más tranquila y sus preguntas se encaminaron a otros aspectos. Su reportaje aparece más abajo, el cual también puede ser

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visitado en <http://www.usnews.com/articles/business/economy/2008/07/11/will-bug-based-food-coloring-catch-on.html>, que es ampliamente recomendado lo hagan y dejen sus comentarios en el mencionado sitio de internet, ya que hasta el momento, la mayoría de los comentarios son desfavorables hacia la grana cochinilla como fuente de color de alimentos.

Los datos completos de Candice Novak, así como su reportaje aparecen a continuación:

Candice Novak

Money & Business

U.S. News & World Report

1050 Thomas Jefferson St. NW

Washington, DC 20007

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Will Bug-Based Food Coloring Catch On?

By [Candice Novak](#), Posted July 11, 2008

Would you rather eat something made from petroleum or bugs? It's not a dare but the crux of a change in the food industry. Pressure on companies to abandon [artificial dyes](#) is expected to result in increased use of natural food colors—the most popular of which is cochineal, a dye made from insects that are ground up and added to foods to make them [rosier](#).

The British government has recommended that food manufacturers stop using additives like Red No. 40 and Yellow No. 5 (commonly called "nasties" in the U.K.) by the start of 2009. Some American activists, [citing studies](#) linking eight artificial dyes to hyperactivity in children, want the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to take a similar stance.

A move away from artificial food coloring would spur demand for a red dye made from the cochineal beetle. Cochineal, often known as carmine, has already made its way into hundreds of U.S. products, including yogurt, waffles, and lipstick.

Demand in Peru alone for the cochineal dye has doubled in the past six years, from 1,000 tons of dry cochineal in 2002 to 2,000 tons now, according to the Cochineal Working Group, a network of farmers and researchers. The dye is made by scraping female bugs and their eggs off cactus leaves and grinding them into a powder. The main producers are in Peru, [Chile](#), and the Canary Islands.

"Production could be more if necessary," says Liberato Portillo, coordinator of the Cochineal Working Group, a section of the International Technical Cooperation Network on Cactus, which provides information and research on cacti. As demand has increased, Ethiopia and China have started cultivating the insects as well, Portillo says.

Making carmine the main source for natural orange, red, and blue tints might be easier said than done, says Al Baroudi, president of Food Safety Institute International, a consulting group based in Henderson, Nev. "People who are farming it now don't have a

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remote idea of what the demand will be" if large international manufacturers start placing huge orders for the dye to keep their foods' vibrant colors—and their customers.

Baroudi says the price of carmine would no doubt go up with demand. The cost of carmine is generally about four times that of coal- and petroleum-based synthetic dyes—between \$50 and \$80 per kilogram for carmine, compared with \$10 to \$20 for synthetics. Jeff Greaves, president of Food Ingredient Solutions in Teterboro, N.J., says that with carmine, "you typically have to spend 10 to 20 times as much to get the same color intensity" as you would using artificial colors.

Although the FDA has rebuffed calls for it to ban [artificial colorings](#), experts expect many food companies to shift on their own to satisfy international markets. Global Industry Analysts reported in late 2007 that "outbreaks of food scares and heightened awareness of the health benefits of organically produced ingredients are thought to be behind the dramatic turn from unhealthy ingredients."

Greaves says that "there is definitely a trend towards natural color.... Carmine sales are up 20 percent this year already." Greaves's company processes and distributes both artificial and natural food colors for sale in North America and Europe. It is one of the world's biggest carmine suppliers, selling about 75 tons of the dye per year.

"There's still a cultural 'icky' thing about carmine," Greaves says. But drastic market change is not unprecedented. In the mid-1970s, "Red [Dye] No. 2 got removed overnight, and what replaced it was carmine," he adds. Use of Red No. 40 also increased after the FDA banned Red No. 2.

Companies will "work real hard to formulate new colors for export," says John Rushing, an expert on food science and business who teaches at North Carolina State University. Red cabbage is another source for a natural dye, but it's much more expensive than carmine, Rushing says.

Cochineal is [not without](#) controversy, and not just because making food coloring from insects may be unappetizing. For one thing, cochineal is an allergen. "Allergies to carmine are less common than to artificial food coloring, but they can be severe," says Michael Jacobson, executive director of the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a Washington health advocacy group that supports a ban on artificial food dyes. "If carmine is used, it should absolutely be indicated on the food label as a potential allergen."

Carmine is also an animal-based dye, which doesn't sit well with vegans and vegetarians. Erik Marcus of Vegan.com says foods with carmine "are always nonvegan. "There is already a small effort to avoid carmine. When Nestlé, the Swiss food manufacturing giant, switched its Smarties candies from artificial reds to carmine in 2004, it was blasted by vegetarian groups for the insect content. [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals](#) lists candies with no carmine (or other animal-based substances) on its website, and a few [cosmetics companies](#) tout themselves as "[carmine free](#)."

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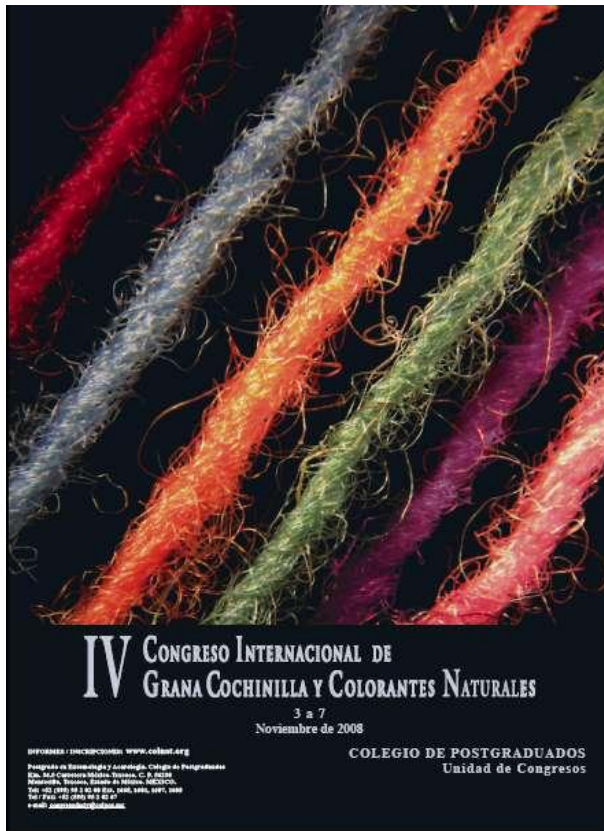
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Antonio Bustamante en su página www.foodsafe.cl hace una invitación a los “cochenilleros” a participar de su programa de contactos sobre grana cochinilla en www.facebook.com, Es una excelente plataforma de intercambio sobre diversos tópicos de la grana cochinilla, carmín, aspectos medicinales, textiles y de mercado.

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Congresos



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English summary

Dear friends, this electronic informational Nocheztli arrives with good news: the cochineal price is increasing. UK is going to ban some artificial dyes in 2009, and we will be together in our next international congress on cochineal.

Candice Novak from U.S. News & World Report has made a good investigation on cochineal and its market. The article link is here:

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/business/economy/2008/07/11/will-bug-based-food-coloring-catch-on.html>.

Antonio Bustamante invites you, through his webpage www.foodsafe.cl, to join the discussion board on cochineal in www.facebook.com, where several topics on carmine, medicinal uses, market and more are discussed.

You are still in time to be part of the IV International Congress on Cochineal and Natural Dyes, please visit www.colnat.org for details on workshops, conferences and more. For direct contact e-mail Dra. Celina Llanderal: congreso@colnat.org.