



## Açaí Sales Show Wild Growth

Photo courtesy of SAMBAZON



Açaí (*Euterpe badiocarpa*) is a delicious berry native to the Amazon rainforest. It has been a staple in Amazonian diets for centuries, but was only recently introduced to the United States in early 2000. Açaí's unique flavor is a combination of boysenberry and cherry with chocolate overtones.

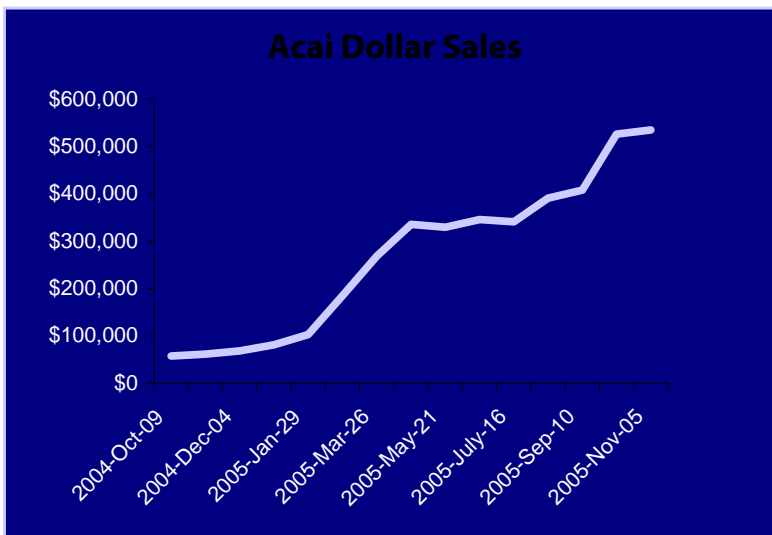
Products featuring Açaí are showing impressive growth in both the natural and conventional channels. With nearly \$3.8 million in sales for the last 52-week period, compared to

sales of \$435,000 in the previous year, Açaí products have experienced an amazing year-over-year growth of nearly 770%\*.

The berry pulp contains a very high concentration of anthocyanins, the antioxidants that give grapes and red wine their many health benefits and rich purple color. Anthocyanins have been found to exhibit potential therapeutic effects including prevention and treatment of diabetic conditions of the vascular system as well as inflammatory conditions related to the brain and nervous system. Other benefits of anthocyanins may include a protective effect against negative reactions to radiation and chemotherapy. Açaí also contains an almost perfect amino acid make up along with important trace minerals, which are essential to proper muscle function.

In addition, Açaí contains several different compounds that share the ability to lower high cholesterol levels in the body. Açaí contains the very same balance of Omega 6 and Omega 9 essential fatty acids as olive oil. Both of these help to lower LDL (harmful cholesterol) while maintaining HDL (beneficial cholesterol) levels. Açaí is a great source of dietary fiber and phytosterols, which help promote the health of the cardiovascular and digestive systems. Phytosterols help to make up plant cell walls. They provide numerous health benefits to the body, specifically reducing blood cholesterol. Dietary fiber also balances unhealthy cholesterol levels. The fiber binds to cholesterol that the body excretes in the form of bile acids, preventing it from being reabsorbed into the blood stream.

The Açaí phenomenon is spreading across America like wild fire. It has already received considerable media attention, including being named one of the "Top Ten Superfoods for Age-Defying Beauty" by Dr. Perricone on Oprah's popular talk show. Açaí has already surpassed wheatgrass shots in popularity in the juice bar market.



The present growth of Acai is primarily due to successful new product launches by a small handful of brands. Acai can be found as a key ingredient in various functional beverages and frozen novelty bars. The pulp is available in stores as a frozen fruit, which can be added to homemade smoothies. Acai is also sold as a supplement in extract and capsule form.

Acai is an up-and-coming ingredient with far-reaching potential for growth and expansion across many categories. This amazing superfood offers a desirable combination of delicious flavor and powerful nutrition, making it a choice functional ingredient for a variety of foods ranging from cereals and muffins to chocolate and other desserts.

\* 52 weeks ending 10/8/05, SPINSscan Natural and Conventional channels (SPINSscan Conventional database powered by ACNielsen Scantrack)

*Information sources: SAMBAZON, Inc., Zola Acai, and "Brazilian Fruticultura" by Pimentel Gomes.*