

## Stevia and its evaluation by EFSA

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*Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni, commonly known as Stevia, is a plant that has been used for centuries by natives of South America to sweeten foods and beverages. The leaves of the plant produce sweet components, known as steviol glycosides, which are up to 300 times sweeter than sugar, and can be extracted from the leaves of the Stevia plant to sweeten food without providing calories.

In the first part of this podcast you will hear from Dr. Ashley Roberts (Vice President of Food & Nutrition, Cantox Health Sciences International), who provides an introduction to Stevia and steviol glycosides.

As part of its risk assessment of additives the European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) panel on additives (ANS - Food additives and nutrient sources added to food panel) performed a risk assessment of steviol glycosides entitled "Scientific Opinion on the safety of steviol glycosides for the proposed uses as a food additives". In the second part of the podcast, Dr. John Christian Larsen (Technical University of Denmark and Division of Toxicology and Risk Assessment at the Danish National Food Institute), chairman of the ANS panel, provides an overview of the risk assessment process with a focus on the opinion on steviol glycosides.

For additional information about Stevia

[Food Today n°69 \(2009\) Stevia: a natural sweetener with potential](#)

EFSA - Related documents

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/press/news/ans100414>

<http://www.efsa.europa.eu/en/efsajournal/pub/1537.htm>