Global Market Study on Stevia: Beverages Will Remain the Dominant Application Segment Through 2020

Description:
Stevia rebaudiana is a South American plant, belonging to the Asteraceae family. Traditionally, stevia has been used as a sweetener in beverages and tea. Stevia plants are harvested in many countries around the world, including Paraguay, Brazil, and China. China has the distinction of being the leading exporter of stevia in the world.

It is believed that the Guaraní peoples of South America have been using stevia rebaudiana for more than 1,500 years. In the modern times, it was in the 1970s that Japan began cultivating stevia for commercial use. The first company to produce stevia commercially was Morita Kagaku Kogyo Co., Ltd. Today, stevia is widely consumed as a sweetener in Japan; it accounts for approximately 40% of the sweetener market in Japan.

Stevia was introduced in the U.S. market in the 1980s as a non-caloric natural sweetener. The popularity of stevia in U.S. and other developed countries has grown steadily over the years, and rising obesity levels have augured well for generating its demand. Leading multinational brands, such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi have launched products containing stevia as an ingredient to appeal to health-conscious consumers.

Stevia is intensely sweet and it adds little or no calories when used as an ingredient in the manufacture of food products. This property of stevia has made it a viable sugar substitute.

Stevia Market Analysis

The global stevia market was valued at US$ 347 million in 2014 and it is projected to expand at a healthy single-digit CAGR to reach a valuation of US$ 565.2 million by 2020. On the other hand, stevia consumption as an ingredient, which was valued at 5,100.6 tonnes in 2014 is forecasted to reach 8,506.9 tonnes by 2020.

PMR's analysis found that Asia-Pacific excluding Japan (APEJ) was the most lucrative region for the stevia market, with a market share of over 25% in 2014. Availability of cheap, skilled labour is a key driver for the growth of stevia market in APEJ. Increasing penetration of private label companies and inclination of consumers towards natural ingredients are other key drivers for this region. Other key regions for the stevia market are North America and Latin America. Consumer reluctance for stevia-based products in Europe will translate into modest growth of stevia market in the region.

Stevia Market: Key Drivers

Consumer awareness on the benefits of consuming low-calorie sugars is anticipated to be the key driver that will fuel the growth of the global stevia market. Thanks to internet proliferation, which has made quick dissemination of information possible, consumers today are much more aware of the benefits of eating healthy foods. Stevia has been viewed favourably by consumers, and the launch of stevia based products has received a positive response from consumers.

In addition to rising consumer awareness, government initiatives have also helped provide an impetus to the stevia market. Governments around the world are advocating the use of low-calorie sugars while extending the support to the cultivation of stevia.

Favourable government regulations governing the use of stevia are also anticipated to boost the market. In Europe, stevia has been approved as a sweetener in food, while in the U.S., the approval for sweet glycosides as an ingredient in beverages is projected to augur well for the prospects of the stevia market. Furthermore, regulatory approvals for stevia in developing countries is also projected to bolster the growth of the stevia market.

Aggressive marketing of stevia-based products by key players, along with product availability on the shelf has helped create brand awareness, which in turn is anticipated to enhance the sale of these products. Demand for antioxidants and natural ingredient products is projected to be another key factor for the growth of the stevia market. Stability in the supply chain and consolidated nature of the stevia industry is anticipated to compel key players to broaden their offerings in the market.
Stevia Market: Social Media Sentiment Analysis

Persistence Market Research's social media analysis on the global stevia market revealed that an overwhelming majority of users had a positive sentiment towards stevia and food products containing stevia. The social media sentiment analysis further revealed that most of the mentions about stevia originated in North America indicating that consumer awareness was high in the region. Stevia-based drinks from leading brands, such as Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and Nestlé were the top trending mentions across social media channels. Nestea, Coca-Cola Life, Pepsi True, and Sprite Green were the most discussed products and overall the sentiment was positive about them.

PMR's social media sentiment analysis further revealed that among stevia-based beverages, confectionary, and packaged food, stevia-based packaged foods generated the highest mentions and more than 70% of these mentions were positive. Overall, PMR's social media sentiment analysis on stevia revealed that consumers appreciated stevia-based products and were receptive towards using them.

Stevia Market: Competitive Landscape

Nestlé S.A. is a dominant player in the stevia market and its stevia-based offerings have been well-received by consumers. Nestlé has a wide range of stevia-based beverages and food products. The company is focusing on launching low-calorie products based on a combination of stevia and cane sugar sweetener.

Other key companies in the global stevia market are,
Cargill Inc.
Evolva Holding S.A.
PureCircle Ltd.
Stevia Corp.
Ingredion Inc.
GLG Life Tech Corp.
Tate & Lyle Plc.
The Coca-Cola Company
PepsiCo Inc.

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