



Dear LaCroix friends,

My name is Hend Letaief-Els, I am currently the Director of Quality Assurance at National Beverage. Prior to this I was a Professor and Researcher in the College of Agricultural and Food Sciences at California State University, Fresno. I have earned a PhD in Food Science and Technology, and I spent more than 10 years of my career working on fruit development and maturation as well as looking at bioactive compounds in fruit, such as Grapes, Oranges and Prickly Pear. Because of my experience, I believe I can provide meaningful comments on the recent discussions around certain chemical compounds found in LaCroix products that are alleged to be dangerous for human health.

Because so many people are looking for the truth and asking for answers about the source and authenticity of LaCroix flavors, I feel compelled to respond.

Because our LaCroix flavors are extracted from plants, they contain terpenoids. These are the same terpenoids that are present in Orange juice and used to flavor ice cream, candy, chewing gum and many other food products. Because they are used in food, they are subject to strict FDA and international regulations that control dosage, authenticity and purity.

At National Beverage, we use flavors extracted directly from the fruit. We and our suppliers don't add any synthetic chemicals. We use only the flavors that are approved by the FDA. They are extracted using methods that totally exclude any chemical extraction or exposure to synthetic chemicals. We work with our suppliers to formulate the purest and most authentic flavors for our products. We spend a tremendous amount of work and time testing for quality and consistency to make sure we get the best and safest flavors.

Now I would like to write few notes to explain why our flavors are both safe and exceptional for health! As a food scientist, I spent quite some time working on chemical compounds and researching their health and technological benefits. I am myself a health-conscious person, especially after I discovered my intolerance for certain foods. Because of my dietary restrictions I started looking for solutions to improve my lifestyle and introduce new habits to my daily routine, and LaCroix was part of the solution.

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It's widely known that citrus essential oils are a source of multiple beneficial nutrients for us. Holistic Chef, Adina Niemerow, who uses food as medicine and has also written a best-selling book called "Super Cleanse", explains the benefits of drinking hot water and lemon juice in the morning as the key drink for a healthier life.

Citrus fruits like Lemon, Lime, Orange and Grapefruit naturally contain many health promoting [volatile] essential oils that are made of hundreds of chemical compounds. Nature provides these elements that we find pleasing to our senses and are beneficial for our body. We consume them daily in fruits, vegetables, foods, beverages and even dietary supplements.

And who doesn't love freshly pressed lemonade, especially if prepared from whole lemons! Like our La Croix Lime, Lemon, Grapefruit, Tangerine and Orange sparkling waters, Lemonade contains Limonene. Scientists not only confirm that Limonene is a chemical with fairly low toxicity, they have also determined that it does not pose any mutagenic, carcinogenic, or nephrotoxic risk to humans. It has actually been used to dissolve cholesterol-containing gallstones and has also been used for relief of heartburn/GERD, because of its gastric acid neutralizing effect and improvement of peristalsis.

We at National Beverage only have to use a hint of an essence that contains limonene in which to provide the wonderful aroma and flavor you have grown to love. I hope today I gave more reasons to love it even more!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "Hend", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Hend

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