

For Immediate Release

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Potatoes: The Stuff America's Made Of

NatureSeal's Healthy Solutions Inspire New Potato Markets

WESTPORT, CT, March 8, 2005—For thousands of years, the potato has been a staple for civilizations throughout the world. But like any other fresh produce, the potato's uses have been limited by the process of rapid browning, or oxidation. Today, the potato is exploding in a veritable renaissance in the North American processor markets, thanks to two new formulations developed by Westport-based Mantrose-Haeuser Co., Inc., the makers of the NatureSeal® family of products for fresh-cut produce.

Sulfites: Freshness at a Cost?

To delay enzymatic browning, many food processors apply sulfites derived from mined sulfur dioxide to their produce. But asthmatic reactions among many consumers led to a 1986 FDA ban on sulfite use on raw fruits and vegetables to maintain color and crispness; other foods and beverages must be labeled if they contain even low levels of the preservative. Canada has joined in, segregating sulfites from any food products in manufacturing, and there is talk in both Canada and Mexico of banning sulfite use altogether.

NatureSeal: the Sulfite-free Choice

Where does this leave food processors' quest for a safe, effective preservative for fruits and vegetables? NatureSeal's new food preservation technology holds the solution. Two new formulations developed by Mantrose-Haeuser now offer sulfite-free alternatives for extending the shelf life of fresh-cut potatoes. And the good news doesn't stop there. For the fast-growing organic foods market, NatureSeal offers an OMRI-certified formulation for use on organic potatoes. European processors have also found benefits from the organically certified potato formulation: it maintains the freshness and color in potatoes and other root crops.

"The convenience factor is expanding across non-traditional fresh-cut fruits and vegetables. Consumer demand for fresh flavor without the risk of side effects is compelling processors to offer these fresh-cut items without using chemicals and known allergens. The NatureSeal line of products is a simple and consumer-friendly alternative", said William Barrie, President of Mantrose-Haeuser.

Easy to apply, both NatureSeal potato treatments extend the shelf life of cut potatoes by up to two weeks, inhibit discoloration and help maintain texture and flavor. They eliminate the need to ship cut potatoes in water, thereby minimizing freight expenses, and use GRAS (Generally Recognized As Safe) ingredients. The treatments are free of genetically modified organisms. These versatile products are also effective on sweet potatoes, yams, and turnips—even the cut ends of corn on the cob. With NatureSeal, the potato can continue to reign as one of the most popular foods on our tables for a few more millennia.

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About NatureSeal

The NatureSeal project began with a joint effort between Mantrose-Haeuser Co., Inc. and the USDA to develop a shelf life extender comprised of vitamins and minerals specifically for sliced apples, which led to the co-patented product NatureSeal for Apples. Through an extensive on-going effort, the Mantrose-Haeuser Research and Development team has since developed an entire line of NatureSeal treatments and are continually working to develop new formulations to meet the ever-growing needs of the fresh-cut industry.

About Mantrose-Haeuser

Mantrose-Haeuser, Co., Inc., headquartered in Westport, Connecticut, is a world leader in edible film coatings for the pharmaceutical, confectionery and agricultural industries.