

China's Monk fruit sweetener thrives in the food, medicine and cosmetic industry

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Monkfruit or luohan guo (*Siraitia grosvenorii* spec.), a natural sweetener fruit from a herbaceous perennial vine native to southern China is known for creating a sweetness sensation 250 times stronger than sucrose. The fruit extract, called mogrosides has been used as a low-calorie sweetener for drinks and in traditional Chinese medicine. Monk fruit is known as the "oriental god fruit".

The monk fruit industry in Guilin City of south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is known as the "home of monk fruit" as it boasts suitable conditions for the planting and growth of monk fruit.

According to a 2023 report from Market analysis agency, *Mordor Intelligence*, the global monk fruit sweeteners market is projected to register a CAGR of 4.8% over the next five years. North America dominates the global monk fruit sweeteners market.

Monk fruit has appeared in more than 800 product launches in the US, but it is still relatively little used in Asia as a natural sugar alternative. Food and beverage companies in Asia are increasingly using monk fruit as a natural sweetener due to consumer demand for less sugar and natural ingredients.

Increasing diabetic incidence and the negative health effects of sugar are driving market demand for natural sugar alternatives such as mogrosides. Additionally, diet conscious consumers' preference for low-calorie and zero-calorie sugar products is contributing to the market demand.

As reported in *The Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry* in September 2022, mogrosides enhances the good bacteria in human guts, suggesting it may have prebiotic properties that will be investigated in future human clinical trials.

The sugar substitute sweeteners extracted from monk fruit are exported to Southeast Asia, Europe and America among others, with the export of the whole industry hitting 794 million yuan in 2021. In Asia, monk fruit is approved for use as a food additive, food ingredient, and traditional food in a number of countries including China, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Vietnam and Thailand.



Launch of China's Guilin monk fruit industry high-quality development index in 2023

A latest **China's Guilin monk fruit industry high-quality development index report** indicates that Monk fruit is currently experiencing a high-quality development momentum resulting in thriving industrial performance. The report is jointly launched in March 2023 by China Economic Information Service and the Guilin Municipal People's Government, aiming at promoting the high-quality development of the monk fruit industry in Guilin region.

The initiative reflects on the development level and mogrosides brand influence on the consumer sector perspective which will definitely influence industrial strength, development quality, industrial environment, and industrial benefits.

According to the index report, from 2016 to 2021, the average planting income per mu (about 666.7 square meters) of monk fruit in Guilin increased from 5,000 yuan to 9,000 yuan, and monk fruit has become a worthy "fruit of wealth" locally. The total index reached 185.67 points in 2021, maintaining a high annual average growth rate of 13.17 percent since 2016.

Further, Report indicates that in 2021, the city recorded 168.37 points on the industrial strength index, which reflects the expanding Monk fruit industry, with a comprehensive industrial organization system integrating small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives, and farmers.

Monk fruit being a major contributor to food and beverage industry has equally significant influence in medicine and cosmetics industries. Monk fruit sweeteners contain added functional properties such as anti-inflammatory, anti-microbial, and anti-carcinogenic properties, providing additional medicinal value to consumers. Guilin has also developed a variety of deep processing products with monk fruit sold under various packaged brands.

Archer Daniels Midland Company, Tate & Lyle Plc., GLG Life Tech Corp., Monk Fruit Corp., Steviva Brands, Inc. are the major global companies operating in Monk Fruit Sweetener Market.