

Exploring the Use of *Stevia rebaudiana* as a Sweetener in Comparison with Other Sweeteners

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ABSTRACT Stevia extract was prepared by boiling stevia leaf powder in water. Sweetness equivalence was tested by comparing sweetness of extract with sugar and other sweeteners like sugar free, equals, natura, sugar free natura and saccharine. Eleven recipes viz milk, coffee, tea, *gajar halwa*, milk shake, *kheer*, curd, lemon water, custard, *halwa* and *lapsi* were prepared using stevia extract and other sweeteners for sensory evaluation. Results revealed that 5g of sugar, 500mg of sugar free, 500mg of natura, 40mg of saccharine, 650mg of equals and 1.50ml of stevia extract in 100ml of water were equal in sweetness. Recipes prepared by using stevia extract were superior than the other sweeteners while saccharine as a sweetener recorded significantly minimum acceptability scores comparatively and was not preferred by the panel members.