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**RICE PROTEIN PURVEYOR AXIOM FOODS
EDUCATES PUBLIC ON HEAVY METALS IN U.S. FOOD SUPPLY
Metals Naturally Occurring Constituents in Healthy Soils
What is Considered Toxic?**

(May 13, 2014, Los Angeles, CA) – [Axiom Foods](#), whose Oryzatein[®] enzyme-extracted, brown rice protein is supplied to food and beverage manufacturers throughout the U.S., Europe and other countries, is embarking on a campaign to educate consumers about the reality of heavy metals in plant food-- As Dr. Oz said in a recent segment, the people have the right to know the truth. It is important to know that those whose diets consist mostly of vegetables have a naturally higher heavy metal contribution to their bodies* than those who ingest an animal-based diet, especially with the sharp rise in vegetarianism and veganism in the U.S. ([Google Trends](#) reported a doubling of veganism since 2010). Axiom, an ethically-based food ingredient provider, has been on a mission to educate consumers on all of the aspects of how and why metals naturally occur in vegetables that grow in healthy soil, so they can make informed decisions about their intake and understand *if and when* those levels are toxic to the organs and other parts of the body.

The problem with any metals, beneficial or not, is when the substance reaches toxic levels in the body.

Here is a list of facts:

- The FDA requires all food supplement imports to be tested by accredited laboratories and sets recommended standards for heavy metals. The FDA has looked to Axiom Food's technology as the standard for responsible sourcing and isolating of rice protein. Axiom's patent pending Oryzatein[®] has had a heavy metal management program since receiving QAI organic certification in 2009, and has been set to meet low heavy metal goals in 2014, which were requested for mid-2015. Being the first GRAS certified rice protein, Oryzatein underwent strenuous testing which included having safe non-toxic heavy metal levels.
- Heavy metals, such as arsenic, cadmium and lead are in all plants that grow in healthy soil because they are natural constituents of the Earth's crust and have existed on earth since its formation (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2011).
- If heavy metals are not naturally occurring, and instead due to pollution, they appear in significantly higher levels, including cadmium at levels of 57-160ppm (Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry).
- Proposition 65, the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act of 1986 created to regulate the effect of fracking on California's water supply, states that listed chemicals can occur naturally in certain foods, as an inherent part of the food's composition, because chemicals that occur naturally in the soil are taken up by food crops, or for other reasons (State of California Department of Justice Office of the Attorney General).

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- Heavy metals, often referred to as minerals, are a factor in all plant foods we eat. We consume more metals daily in common foods, from kale, avocados, peanut butter, sweet potatoes, tuna, and celery, to asparagus, strawberries and mushrooms, apple juice and spinach to spices, than we consume from plant-based supplements. Any metal, including those that are essential to the body to function can cause toxicity if introduced at high levels (Total Diet Study Statistics on Element Results, 2007, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, U.S. Food and Drug Administration).
- Some metals, such as iron, copper, chromium, cobalt, manganese, molybdenum, selenium and zinc are required by the human body in trace amounts as essential nutrients. Naturally, any metal in the soil or surrounding bodies of water will leech into any plants we consume. This environmental exposure impacts both organic and conventionally grown crops ([European Food Safety Authority](#), 2012, “Metals as Contaminants in Food.”)
- The benefits for plant-based protein are critical. By 2047 there will be more people worldwide over 60-years facing sarcopenia and muscle loss than people under 15-years ([United Nations, World Population Prospects 2010](#)) and a world protein shortage is expected. Currently, approximately 50 million people in the US are allergic to or intolerant to dairy and 1 in 133 Americans suffer from allergies to wheat gluten, according to the [National Foundation of Celiac Awareness](#); many plant-based proteins are allergen-friendly, aside from soy protein.
- Organic arsenic and organic cadmium are more common and hundreds of times less toxic than inorganic versions in plant-based food, they are easily flushed out by the body, and may have benefits including organic cadmium helping fight breast cancer (Journal of Inorganic Biochemistry).
- Just because a food contains a certain level of metal does not mean the body will absorb or retain it; [The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#) states, for example, only 2-6% of ingested cadmium is absorbed.
- According to the [Journal of the American Medical Association](#), vegans are shown to live longer.
- Some plants that grow in water, such as rice, spinach and asparagus, are often targeted as [contaminated](#) by heavy metals because some crops have been found to be in polluted areas of the world. This is well known by efficacious growers and manufacturers and as such they consciously choose pristine fields and regularly test in specifically certified laboratories to ensure levels are below what is considered to be toxic, and sources are changed if the levels change. In China, for example, one polluted field cited in the news recently was 3000 miles away from where Axiom has sourced rice on the Himalayan border of Tibet.
- Testing for contamination in food products needs to be done in U.S. accredited laboratories, where standards for calibration exist and highly-educated practitioners test with accepted scientific methodologies. Test results can vary vastly based on seemingly insignificant factors. In April, 2013, Dr. Tongesayi of Monmouth University, released a study showing he'd found levels of metal that exceeded FDA safety limits and was later recalled because his [instruments were not calibrated](#).
- Standards for levels of metals are recommended by World Health Organization (W.H.O.), The European Union, The Canadian Natural Health Products Directorate, the U.S. FDA (tolerable daily intake), US Pharmacopeia, U.S. EPA (drinking water) and California's [Proposition 65](#). All companies that sell products with any levels of metals must be tested by accredited laboratories. These tests are typically measured in “parts per million” (ppm); when numbers are reported as “parts per billion” (ppb) they appear exaggeratedly large and raise unnecessary alarm to the consumer.
- Tungsten metal has only been deemed toxic if inhaled in an industrial, occupational setting. When you eat or drink things containing tungsten, much of the tungsten passes through your digestive system and is released from your body in the

feces ([Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry](#)). Tungsten testing is new and has not been deemed toxic in any plant protein supplements.

- Errors can occur in testing and managing levels so close to the detection limit that it can create great variances, even up to 50%. The amounts are similar to taking a cube of sugar, chopping it into 1,000 pieces, taking one of those pieces and then chopping it into 1,000 more pieces, and then testing that final piece.
- How much one ingests is not indicative of how much is retained as the body is a natural filter, dependent upon health factors and level of nutrition, as many foods act as natural antioxidants, helping further filter heavy metals.

“Because we provide whole grain brown rice protein to food manufacturers worldwide,” said Axiom CEO, David Janow, “certifying bodies such as the FDA and USDA watch what we do very closely and have come to us for intelligence on setting standards. Testing our products in the most well-respected and, most importantly, *certified* laboratories, is a continuous part of our daily process. Proper testing will make the difference between something that appears to be safe or toxic. We provide our test results to all our customers. We source from the most pristine fields in the world, avoiding polluted areas and changing sources if tests show otherwise. As makers of human food, we are in a highly responsible position and work as closely with Mother Nature as she will allow. At this time in history, avoiding pollution of any kind is no easy task, but it’s something we pursue diligently as part of our standards and practices.”

Axiom Foods is the most innovative source for allergen-friendly, whole grain brown rice ingredients and known for their natural and proprietary, hexane-free methodologies for extracting fractions of other plant-based ingredients such as pea protein, rice milk and others. Since 2005, the California-based company has maximized the potential of Oryzatein[®] whole grain brown rice protein, continuously sourcing from new and different pristine fields around the world. Axiom continues to widen the possibilities of the world’s third largest plant crop into healthful products on which humans thrive.

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*Krajcovicova et al. Cadmium Blood Concentrations in Relation to Nutrition. Cent Eur J Publ Health. 2006; 14(3): 126-129