



## IS COTTONSEED OIL OK?

*July 2, 2014*

All the different health and diet fads penetrating the periodicals and the airwaves today can make it hard to separate the good from the bad – in both the products and in the many different opinions surrounding them. Cottonseed oil is certainly no exception. A quick Internet search turns up conflicting results and opinions. On one side, cottonseed oil is portrayed as the devil oil – horrible for your health, full of bad fats and pesticides, and a quick ticket to an earlier grave. Next you'll read that cottonseed oil is a healthy, tasty alternative to more traditional oils, full of essential vitamins and minerals and boasting a balance of good fats.

So what is the truth about cottonseed oil? The reality is less about good versus bad oils and more about good versus bad information; myth versus fact. Over the next few posts, we will address some of the main issues raised against cottonseed oil. Today, let's talk about pesticides.

### **MYTH 1:** Cottonseed oil is chock full of unhealthy pesticides

It's no secret that U.S. cotton, as with many commodity food crops, is grown using some pesticides. That said, the amount of pesticides used to grow cotton today is far less than in previous years, most notably from the late 1970s through the early 1990s, when cotton growers were fighting to eradicate the boll weevil. The boll weevil is a beetle native to Mexico that has singlehandedly been the United States' most costly pest, by some estimates costing cotton farmers in excess of \$15 million. After a successful pilot eradication program in Mississippi during the 1970s, agriculturalists in the other major cotton producing states followed suit, with Texas being the last to join in 1994. By 1997 and after successful eradication of the tenacious boll weevil, cotton farmers quickly and significantly reduced pesticide application to levels that today are even less than those for growing U.S. corn or soybeans.

So how can Acala Farms cottonseed oils be pesticide free? It happens during the extraction of the oil from the seed and the subsequent processing. Pesticides and all contaminants are eliminated from the oils through a deodorization process. Originally popularized in the U.S. by Sam Wesson as a way to remove unwanted flavors, deodorizing in oils is a crucial part of producing the clean, pure oil that is cottonseed oil. Today, this process also removes fatty acids and contaminants (i.e. pesticides) from the finished product by passing steam through the hot oil at low pressure, to remove the unwanted substances. For a complete explanation of deodorization, check out this link from the American Oil Chemists Society (AOCS) blog.

Although we certainly can't speak for all cottonseed oil, we can tell you that Acala Farms Flavor-infused Cottonseed Oils represent a new generation of cottonseed oil that is free of pesticides and unhealthy fats, providing only delicious, exciting, kitchen game changers and a growing appreciation for a versatile old standby.

*Drizzle, Sizzle, Sample & Eat.™*



## IS COTTONSEED OIL OK?

*July 25, 2014*

The truth about cottonseed oil is less about good versus bad oils and more about good versus bad information; myth versus fact. In these next few posts, we will try to shed some light on these truths. Last week, we addressed the misconception that cottonseed oil is chock full of harmful pesticides. This week, we'll talk about the meaning of "good" and "bad" fats as well as their role in cottonseed oil's nutrition.

**MYTH 2:** Cottonseed oil is high in unhealthy, bad fats

To address this concern, we first need to understand what is meant by the terms "good" and "bad" fats. Fats as they pertain to cottonseed oil can be broken into three categories: saturated, monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats. We've briefly explained each below.

**Saturated Fats:** Saturated fats are found predominantly in animal products (milk, cheese, meats) and are normally solid at room temperature. Generally, saturated fat is considered a "bad" fat because it increases levels of LDL, or bad cholesterol.

**Monounsaturated Fats:** Liquid at room temperature but solid when refrigerated, monounsaturated fats lower levels of LDL and raise levels of HDL, or "good" cholesterol. Vegetable oils consist largely of monounsaturated fats.

**Polyunsaturated Fats:** Remain liquid regardless of refrigeration and are found mostly in nuts, seeds, fish, grains and vegetable oils. Polyunsaturated fats also lower levels of LDL cholesterol and boost HDL levels.

So, how does this new generation of cottonseed oil stack up? Quite well is the answer. Each serving of Acala Farms Flavor-infused and PURE cottonseed oil consists of 1 gram saturated, 1 gram monounsaturated, and 2.5 grams polyunsaturated fats. This composition makes Acala Farms cottonseed oil the cooking oil that most closely meets the American Heart Association's recommended 1/3-1/3-1/3 ratio of these three fats. To top it off, cottonseed oil contains no trans fat or cholesterol – great news for your heart and overall health!

Couple these statistics with the fact that Acala Farms Flavor-infused and PURE cottonseed oils are also pesticide-free, Gluten-free, Vegan and Kosher, and rich in Vitamin E and antioxidants, and it is difficult to find any good reason not to keep a healthy supply of Acala Farms cottonseed oil in every kitchen.



## IS COTTONSEED OIL OK?

*September 3, 2014*

The truth about cottonseed oil is less about good versus bad oils and more about good versus bad information; myth versus fact. We've already addressed two common misconceptions: 1) that cottonseed oil is full of pesticides and 2) contains unhealthy fats. Today, let's look at another often-promoted myth: that cotton is not a regulated food crop.

### **MYTH 3:** Cotton is not a regulated food crop

Do a quick Google search on cottonseed oil, and you will be met with a variety of responses, many of them from blogs strongly dissuading readers from consuming cottonseed oil. One of the reasons given is, "cotton is not a regulated food crop."

Let's approach this from a logical standpoint. Go into a local grocery store, and read the labels on various foods. Many popular products such as chips, crackers, baking mixes, salad dressings, pasta sauces etc. contain cottonseed oil. Pure cottonseed oil's light, mild flavor and high smoke point make it an ideal ingredient in many of these products.

Between the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) and the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), things we as consumers choose to purchase are heavily tested before being allowed into the marketplace. Cottonseed oil has been grown and regulated as a food crop in the U.S. for more than 100 years and has been a part of the American diet since the 1882 introduction of Wesson Oil. Its popularity increased when it became the main ingredient in CRISCO® vegetable shortening, remaining a mainstay in America's kitchens until shortages around World War II lead to its replacement with the less costly soybean oil. If cottonseed wasn't a regulated food crop, or was as detrimental as some say, it would not have such longevity or prevalence in the American diet.

An Internet search of "EPA cotton regulations" highlights the scrutiny under which cottonseed is placed before being allowed on the market. This search produces numerous instances both recent and in many years past in which the crop and its growing methods were thoroughly reviewed. A recent instance from Texas in which the EPA denied the emergency use of pesticides to manage invasive weeds can be found [here](#). A continued search through both EPA and FDA databases produces similar instances of both approved and banned pesticides and genetic engineering related to cotton.

So yes, it's true: Cotton is a Food Crop, grown and regulated under the same high-level scrutiny applied to all other portions of our food system. Cottonseed oil's capacity for a variety of flavor infusions, high smoke point, and health benefits make it a great addition to any meal. It's only the first of many cotton-based food products that we have in development. This old standby food crop is making a comeback as a better food option and we are proud to be a part of it.