

All-natural beverages hit state Whole Foods stores

Simply Originals, a husband and wife business based in Rowayton, has hit the beverage industry with two all-natural Andean-based artisanal recipes, Simply Originals Purple Corn beverage and Simply Originals Flaxseed beverage.

Following generations of Peruvian tradition, these naturally functional, non-carbonated beverages have half of the calories and sugar found in most functional beverages in the U.S. today. By the end of August, these beverages will be found in all Northeast Whole Foods, covering southern Connecticut, northern New Jersey and New York.

These natural recipes are part of co-founder Renato Varas' heritage, who grew up drinking them in his native Peru.

Simply Originals Purple Corn beverage is commonly known as "chicha morada" to Peruvians — the most traditional non-alcoholic drink of Peru, and known to be a mega-source of antioxidants.

Chicha morada is a homemade recipe of Andean purple corn, cinnamon, clove, pineapple and lemon that has been passed on from generation to gen-

eration for thousands of years. Purple corn has very high levels of antioxidants, more so than pomegranate and acai due to the anthocyanin C3G (the source of the "purple").

Simply Originals Flaxseed beverage is the first ready-to-drink flaxseed beverage in the U.S. market. Based on the tradition of "emolientes," or herbal fusions, the beverage offers the natural ingredients found in flaxseed — plant-derived omega-3s, antioxidants, fibers, and shave grass, an herb rich in nutrients and high in silica.

Simply Originals Purple Corn beverage and Simply Originals Flaxseed beverage, the first two Simply Originals beverages, were launched in March 2008 at the Natural Products Expo West in Anaheim, Calif. Since then, Renato and Meghan Varas have been self-distributing to local specialty markets and eateries and health stores in Fairfield County and New York City while in the process of partnering with some national U.S. distributors that cater to the natural and organic market to reach customers like Whole Foods Markets.