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## **New Study Shows Citrus Juices Have the Highest Nutrient Content**

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LAKELAND, Fla., May 1 /PRNewswire/ -- In a time when consumers are flooded with so many confusing beverage health claims, 100 percent pure orange juice and Ruby Red grapefruit juice once again stand out as nutritional champions.

A new study shows citrus juices provide more nutrients per calorie than other commonly consumed 100 percent fruit juices such as apple, grape, pineapple and prune. The nutrient-density study, published in the May 2007 issue of the "Journal of Food Science," offers another compelling reason why citrus juices deliver the most bang for the nutritional buck.

"Fruit juices vary considerably in the quantity of nutrients per calorie," explains author Gail Rampersaud of the University of Florida. "The study uncovered just how much better the nutrient profiles of 100 percent grapefruit and orange juice are than other commonly consumed fruit juices."

Citrus juices earned the highest nutrient-density scores because compared to other juices in the analysis they are lower in calories and higher in essential nutrients including:

-- Vitamin C: Orange and grapefruit juices have the highest level of one of the most powerful antioxidants, vitamin C. The vitamin works to neutralize free radicals to help fight cell and tissue damage that could lead to diseases. -- Potassium: After prune juice, citrus juices have the highest level of potassium which plays an important role in cardiovascular health. -- Folate: Orange juice contained the highest amount of folate. Folate has been associated with reducing the risk for certain birth defects and may help lower homocysteine levels in the body. Homocysteine, an amino acid in the blood, has been associated with an increased risk for cardiovascular disease and cognitive impairment, when high levels exist.

Citrus fruit juices tended to be equal to or higher in vitamin A, thiamin, and phosphorous when compared to other juices in the analysis.

The study, co-funded by the University of Florida and the Florida Department of Citrus, used six methodologies to quantify the nutrient density of seven commonly consumed 100 percent juices including apple, grape, orange, pineapple, pink (Ruby Red) grapefruit, prune and white grapefruit. Pink grapefruit juice had the highest nutrient-density score based on all methods except one, where orange juice had a slightly higher score. Orange juice ranked second in all other methods. White grapefruit juice ranked third in all six methods.

### **Why Nutrient-Dense?**

Since many Americans consume more calories than they need without meeting recommended intakes for a number of nutrients, the USDA 2005 Dietary Guidelines encourage consumers to eat more nutrient-dense foods. According to the guidelines, these foods offer important benefits such as reduction of risk for a number of chronic diseases, normal growth and development of children, and health promotion for people of all ages.

The Florida Department of Citrus is an executive agency of Florida government charged with the marketing, research and regulation of the Florida citrus industry. Its activities are funded by a tax paid by growers on each box of citrus that moves through commercial channels. The industry employs approximately 90,000 people, provides a \$9 billion annual economic impact to the state, and contributes hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenues that help support Florida's schools, roads and health care services.

\*Editors Note: If you do not have access to IFT online, please contact Rebecca Barry at 312.729.4113 for a full copy of the study.

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