

Cocoa Is A “Superfruit”

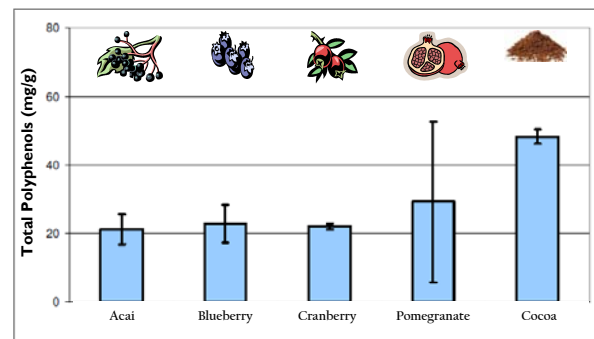
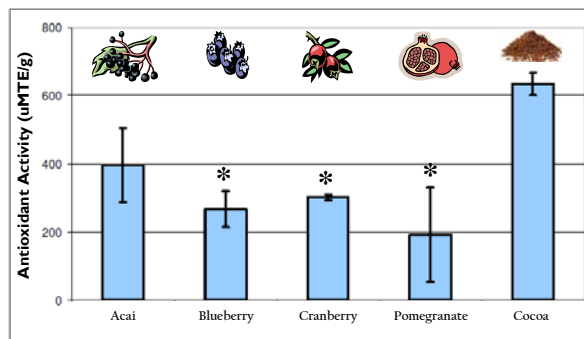
COCOA IS A FRUIT. Cocoa beans are technically not beans, but the seeds of the fruit of the *Theobroma cacao* tree. After harvest, cocoa beans are usually fermented, then dried, have their shell removed, are roasted, and then milled into what is referred to as chocolate liquor. Cocoa powder is produced by pressing most of the fat content (cocoa butter) from the chocolate liquor.



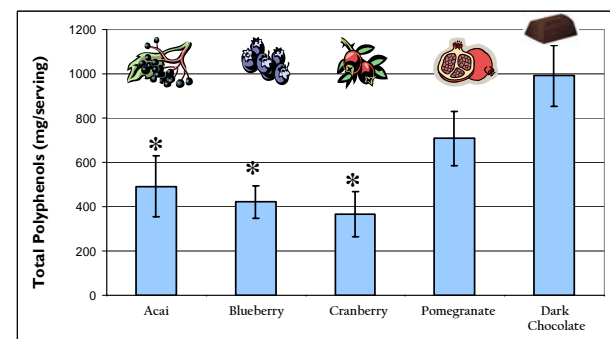
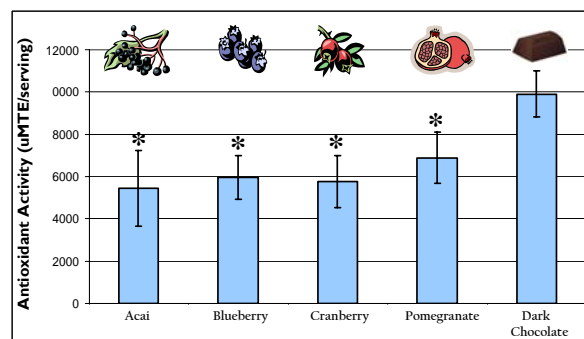
WHAT MAKES A FRUIT “SUPER”? Fruits with large concentrations of polyphenolic compounds and high antioxidant capacity are commonly referred to as “superfruits” in the popular media¹. In a study conducted by the Hershey Center for Health & Nutrition® comparing cocoa powder with powders of several established “superfruits,” it was found that cocoa powder has equivalent or significantly higher antioxidant capacity and total polyphenolic (TP) content compared to the other fruit powders tested².

CHOCOLATE CAN BE “SUPER” TOO. In the same study, dark chocolates (60-63% cacao) were compared with several varieties of commercially available juices made from “superfruits.” On a per serving basis (40 g for chocolate and 240 ml for juices or beverage), the dark chocolates had equivalent or significantly higher antioxidant capacity and TP content compared to the fruit juices tested².

Cocoa powder has equal or greater antioxidant capacity and polyphenol content compared to other “superfruit” powders



Dark chocolate has equal or greater antioxidant capacity and polyphenol content compared to other “superfruit” juices



*significantly less than cocoa or dark chocolate. $p < 0.05$, $n=3$. Values are the mean + SEM.

¹ Gross, P. M. *Superfruits*. McGraw-Hill: 2009. ² Crozier, S.J., et al. Cocoa is a “Super Fruit”: A comparative analysis of various fruit powders and products. *Chem Cent J*. 5:5. 2011.