

C - Caramel

Caramel is a widely used colouring agent for food and drink, and is used in many soft drinks to provide a rich brown colour. It is one of the oldest colouring agents used in the world and has been added to soft drinks such as colas for almost 150 years. In addition, caramel colouring is commonly used in many commercial food products including breads, beers, sauces and toppings, confectioneries, breakfast cereals and ice-creams.

The process of making caramel is relatively simple, and involves removing the residual water from natural sugar such as sucrose, usually by heating. The process causes the sugar molecules to join together into larger molecules, which are darker in colour. A caramel can be made by anyone in their home kitchen simply by carefully melting sugar; this type of caramel is mainly used for flavoring purposes.

Although caramel is made from sugar, it does not contribute to the sugar and calorie content of a soft drink, as the amounts used are so small as to not be physiologically significant.