

# The KOMBUCHA MARKET

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## Ancient Kombucha Beverage Is Making Big Waves According to New Business Report

**Denver, Colorado, USA. December 17, 2009** – Sage Group® LLC ([www.teareport.com](http://www.teareport.com)), a Denver-based tea industry think-tank and publisher, has just released its latest specialty publication, the *Kombucha Market*. The business-to business (B2B) report targets trends, history, production basics, and sensory analysis of various brands, with a comprehensive analysis of this complex beverage.

“After years of obscurity, as natural foods aficionados produced their own Kombucha at home, a handful of savvy entrepreneurs have commercialized production over the last few years. With sales barely reaching a few million dollars in 2001, the ready-to-drink (RTD) market for Kombucha is rapidly approaching sales of \$100 million dollars on an annual basis,” estimates Sage Group® publisher Brian R. Keating.

From roots reportedly going back centuries, the unique ‘mother culture’ used to prepare Kombucha at home has now made the leap to commercial success much like yogurt did decades ago. Kombucha has become one of the hottest selling bottled beverages at natural foods outlets across the United States, including Whole Foods Markets® nationwide. Dozens of new Kombucha brands are launching nationwide, among them Honest Tea®, Red Bull®, Hain Celestial, and other major beverage enterprises. Besides natural foods distribution, Kombucha is widely promoted across the internet and through mail order sales.

“We have not simply produced a traditional B-2-B formatted report on an emerging marketplace and its products, but cover history, definitions, and science, as well as market gaps, potential pitfalls, and business development resources,” adds Keating. The new Sage Group® *Kombucha Market* publication also enlisted the aid of an experienced food and beverage critic, John Lehdorff, to both delineate the organoleptic (sensory) attributes of these novel beverages and produce a rating of Kombucha products using a new scoring scale, indexing their flavor, aroma, mouth-feel, and other components. The report also collaborated with Chromadex™, Inc. (Irvine, CA), a science-based, third party analytical laboratory, to assess multiple constituents found in commercially bottled Kombucha drinks, with a focus on its tea components; many Kombucha brands proclaim tea as a key active ingredient in their products. “We identified a surprisingly diverse number of constituents in the Kombucha brands we analyzed, yet not a substantive quantity of any one item we tested for is apparent in significant levels, including tea constituents,” stated Frank Jaksch, president of the laboratory.

On the market analysis side, veteran trend forecaster Kim Long provides detailed commentary and assessment on Kombucha as it has risen in the marketplace today, and also provides information on the publications and science-based Kombucha research studies. Long has also assembled a Kombucha products profile within the report, covering various brands, companies, varieties (flavors, pricing, sizes), distribution, and contact information.

While once considered a quirky product limited to hippies, natural foods purists, and some holistic healthcare practitioners, Kombucha has morphed into a commercially viable beverage category. Kombucha — both as a RTD beverage and as an ingredient used in other products — now appears poised for advancement into a number of other categories, including energy drinks, science-based functional beverages, and probiotic-oriented drinks. What is apparent is that while sales of Kombucha are currently stellar — and many consumers report mild-to-major improvements in their feeling of well-being tied to regular consumption — there is a lack of clinical research on the beverage. Ultimately, this kind of investigation will be required to support regulatory claims and also garner new millions of untapped consumers who are unaware of Kombucha or are put off by its tart flavor and pungent aroma.

*Kombucha Market* publisher Keating suggests Kombucha may signal the arrival of a new generation of functional beverages. “Like yogurt, kefir, and similar products, Kombucha may well represent a new type

of wellness or functional product, unlike any other seen previously. This comes from a diversity of ingredients and active constituents — carbohydrates, caffeine, antioxidants, alcohol, various natural acids, and pre/probiotics (beneficial yeasts and bacteria). Its uniqueness is also propelled by a staggering diversity of anecdotal health outcomes reported by consumers. Ultimately, Kombucha manufacturers will have to creatively leverage and document the scientific basis of their brands to fully capitalize on the long term success of this fascinating old-world beverage, now leaping off store shelves in record volumes.”

**About Sage Group® LLC.**

Sage Group® has published reports and providing business development advisory services in and on the world of specialty tea for more than twenty years. *The Specialty Tea Is “Hot” Report®* series (six editions since 1995) has become the most referenced tea industry report available internationally. Sage Group® and its publications have been covered by the global media, including the *Economist*, *Newsweek*, *Nutrition Business Journal*, *World Tea News* and numerous other publications.

**About ChromaDex™, Inc.**

ChromaDex™ is a leader in the development of Phytochemical and Botanical Reference Standards and the creation of associated intellectual property. ChromaDex™ is committed to sustainable “green chemistry” and provides the dietary supplement, food, beverage, nutraceutical, and cosmetic industries with the analytical tools and services to meet product regulatory, quality, efficacy and safety standards.

To view an expanded Table of Contents or to order the new Sage Group® *Kombucha Market* visit:  
[www.teareport.com](http://www.teareport.com)

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