

Quest Protein Powder is Here... and the Price is Meh!

written by Mike Roberto | November 6, 2014

Hot off the heels of the new Quest Protein Chips, Quest Nutrition has announced yet another new product:

Quest Protein Powder!



Quest Protein is coming, with five introductory flavors to #CookClean

The product is now out in stores for a far lower price than Quest's website, so compare prices and signed up for price drop notifications below:

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The ingredients are discussed below if you'd like to cut to the chase.

General Summary

Earlier, we had titled this post, “*Quest Protein Powder is Here... and It’s Expensive!*” – The price of \$39.99 was simply not worth recommending.

But a bit of a price war has developed here and it’s now **under \$30 for 2lbs**, so at this point, it’s **definitely worth trying** – especially if you’re a Quest fan or someone who ever cooks with their protein.

The protein is reviewing incredibly well, and the vanilla and “multi-purpose” (unflavored) variations have been working out very well for all of the Quest chefs and smoothie-makers out there.

What’s the story here?



Quest seems to be promoting this as a “cooking-friendly” protein powder, which makes sense, given the incredible things their ambassadors have been able to do with Quest Bars, with their award-winning 15 second long recipe videos on YouTube.

This makes them instant contenders for our **Top 10 Protein Powders** list and buyer’s guide, knowing that they’re “too good and too smart” to put out a bad product.

But for Quest’s customers, who are used to the best-in-class taste from their Quest Bars, it’s all about flavor:

The flavors

The differences ingredients of each one is discussed in the next section below.

Not all stores have all flavors, so you can compare prices below and sign up for price drop alerts:

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The ingredients

There are different ingredients for the different flavors:

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 scoop (31g)
Servings Per Container 29

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	6%
Potassium 90mg	2%
Sodium 170mg	8%
Total Carbohydrate 4g	1%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Sugars <1g	
Protein 23g	46%

Ingredients: Protein Blend (Whey Protein Isolate, Micellar Casein, Milk Protein Isolate), Cocoa, Natural Flavors. Contains less than 2% of the following: Sunflower Lecithin, Xanthan Gum, Cellulose Gum, Steviol Glycosides (Stevia), Salt, Sucralose.

Contains: Milk-Derived Ingredients.

CHOCOLATE

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 scoop (28g)
Servings Per Container 32

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Potassium 85mg	2%
Sodium 115mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 1g	0%
Dietary Fiber <1g	2%
Sugars 0g	
Protein 24g	48%

Ingredients: Protein Blend (Whey Protein Isolate, Micellar Casein). Contains less than 2% of the following: Sunflower Lecithin, Xanthan Gum, Cellulose Gum.

Contains: Milk-Derived Ingredients.

MULTI-PURPOSE

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 scoop (30g)
Servings Per Container 30

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat 5
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Potassium 110mg	4%
Sodium 190mg	8%
Total Carbohydrate 2g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Sugars <1g	
Protein 23g	46%

Ingredients: Protein Blend (Whey Protein Isolate, Micellar Casein, Milk Protein Isolate), Peanuts, Natural Flavors. Contains less than 2% of the following: Sunflower Lecithin, Xanthan Gum, Cellulose Gum, Steviol Glycosides (Stevia), Salt, Sucralose.

Contains: Milk-Derived Ingredients, Peanuts.

PEANUT BUTTER

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 scoop (28g)
Servings Per Container 32

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Potassium 80mg	2%
Sodium 150mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber <1g	3%
Sugars <1g	
Protein 22g	44%

Ingredients: Protein Blend (Whey Protein Isolate, Micellar Casein), Natural Flavors. Contains less than 2% of the following: Cellulose Gum, Sunflower Lecithin, Steviol Glycosides (Stevia), Salt, Carrageenan, Sucralose.

VANILLA

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Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 scoop (28g)
Servings Per Container 32

Amount Per Serving	
Calories	Calories from Fat 0
% Daily Values*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Potassium 95mg	2%
Sodium 125mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 3g	1%
Dietary Fiber <1g	3%
Sugars 2g	
Protein 21g	42%

Ingredients: Protein Blend (Whey Protein Isolate, Micellar Casein, Milk Protein Isolate), Dried Strawberries, Natural Flavors. Contains less than 2% of the following: Sunflower Lecithin, Cellulose Gum, Steviol Glycosides (Stevia), Salt, Carrageenan, Sucralose.

STRAWBERRY

ALL of the Quest Protein Ingredients in one image. Click for a zoom-in.

Taking a deeper look:

- **Protein Blend:**
 - **Whey Protein Isolate**

Fans of Quest Bars will be happy to see this in Quest Protein Powder – whey protein *isolate* is the more highly-filtered form of whey protein where nearly all of the lactose (milk sugars) are filtered out from the

product.

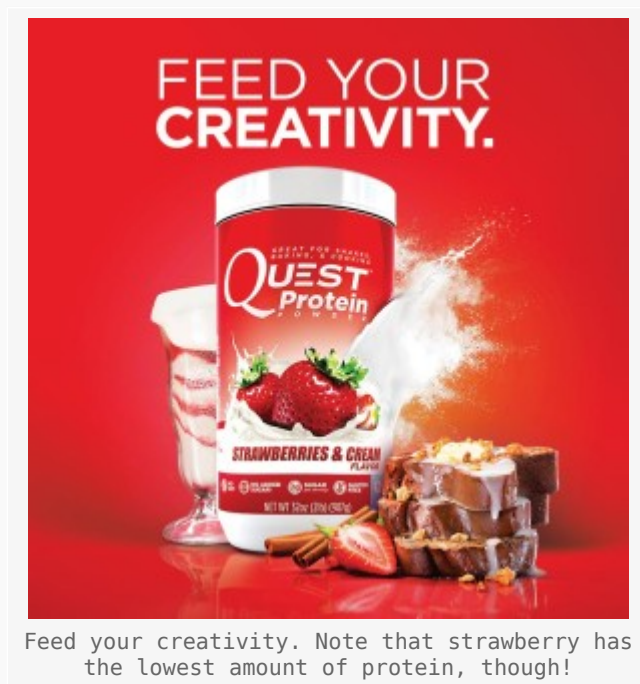
This means that lactose-sensitive and most lactose-intolerant individuals can use this product, just like Quest Bars.

Having this as the first of two protein ingredients is also important – it means that *at least* 50% of the protein comes from the whey isolate. It's lower in carbs than other forms of whey protein (like whey protein concentrate) and has a higher amount of protein per gram of total powder.

Many companies skimp on this because it's more expensive. Quest did not, and that makes sense since it's in line with everything else they make.

Studies on whey protein isolate alone have shown to be effective for body composition, lipids, blood sugar levels, etc.. just like other forms of high-protein supplementation.[1]

- **Micellar Casein**



Casein is the slower-digesting form of protein that comes from dairy, and *micellar* casein is a microfiltered form that's made to have an even higher concentration of protein in the powder.[2]

Casein takes longer to digest, as it forms a "gel" during the digestion process, and provides your body with more of a slow trickle of amino acids. This makes it a popular nighttime protein powder for bodybuilders and athletes who want to keep their muscles fed while they sleep.

However, that's *not* why it's in here. Instead, it's in Quest Protein for

the **thick texture**, which will play very well into the cooking/baking. When companies get the whey-to-casein ratio right, it makes the product *superior* in taste and texture.

Additionally, it's incredible for a snack, because you stay fuller longer, so dieters will also appreciate having this around, as opposed to a pure whey shake that'd be thinner and faster-digesting.

Long story short... this was a smart play by Quest, and their consumers will like it.

- **Milk Protein Isolate (Some flavors)**

Interestingly, only some of the flavors (chocolate, peanut butter, and strawberry) have this ingredient. Milk protein is what we call the *pre-separated* protein that comes from dairy – before the whey is separated from the casein (where you get the phrase “curds and whey”!)

Anyway, milk protein isolate will contain basically 80% casein protein (as discussed above, but possibly without the micellar treatment) and 20% whey protein *isolate* (also discussed above). It's currently the hot thing on the market, and is generally the go-to protein when it comes to both quality *and* flavor.

Quest must have put some extra in there for thickening/flavoring reasons. We're happy to have it, but it'd be interesting to compare thicknesses of the vanilla to the chocolate just for curiosity's sake.

After the proteins, you get some of the special flavors:

- Chocolate contains cocoa
- Peanut butter contains peanuts and natural flavors
- Strawberry contains *real* dried strawberries and other natural flavors

- **The thickening agents**

There are a few thickening agents used, depending on the flavor. Multi-purpose has the least.

- **Xanthan Gum**



Ever eaten a stevia leaf? It's a bit bittersweet, which is why it's good to "balance" out with sucralose, like Quest did here.

(In all flavors *except* strawberry and vanilla)

- **Carrageenan**

(In strawberry and vanilla only)

- **Cellulose Gum**

(In all flavors)

- **Sunflower Lecithin**

(In all flavors)

- **Sweeteners**

There are typically two sweeteners in each of these flavors, except multi-purpose is *unsweetened*.

- **Stevia**

Also shown as "steviol glycosides" on the label.

- **Sucralose**

This is the main sweetener in Splenda brand sweetener, and is by far the most popular sweetener in protein powders. Despite what some believe, it does *not* cause a blood sugar spike.[3,4]

Also, **salt** is added, except to multi-purpose, which is also salt-free (there's still some sodium from the protein, which is natural).

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The multi-purpose powder has the best macronutrients, due to having far less flavoring and additives required.

Best macronutrients: Multi-Purpose (unflavored)

- **Calories:** 100
- **Protein:** 24g
- **Carbohydrates:** 1g (<1g fiber)
- **Fat:** 0g

This comes from 32 *servings* per container (each weighing 28g), which is going to get you the most protein per dollar, yet have none of that great taste or sweetener.

Basically, multi-purpose is a blank slate of protein. Note that whey *does* have a slightly sweet-dairy kind of taste to it, but you don't want to drink this alone. This is for cooking/baking, smoothies, or adding your own flavoring.

Most carbs: Chocolate

Quest is popular with the low-carb demographic, so notice that not all of the flavors shown above are built the same. If you're crazy about your carbs, chocolate is highest due to the cocoa:

- **Calories:** 110
- **Protein:** 23g

- **Carbohydrates:** 4g (2g fiber, <1g sugar)
- **Fat:** 0g

For being as “bad” as it will get, this is quite a good profile.

Chocolate does have less servings than all of the other flavors though, again from the cocoa (which does add that negligible amount of sugar).

It’s sweetened with both stevia and sucralose.

In the end, this will be the most popular flavor, but like nearly every other chocolate powder, you get a bit less protein per dollar – nothing new here.

The other flavors lie somewhere in the middle, with strawberry unfortunately having the *least* amount of protein (21g), and vanilla only having 22g for some reason.

Gluten-free

In addition, Quest has stated it *will* be **gluten-free**, in response to one concerned fan’s question.

Initial Thoughts

The product looks great, no doubt. The macros look clean, and the type of protein they are using will be a good mix of quality and thickness. We’re highly confident that it’ll taste great, because that’s what Quest does and they’re “too big to fail”.

Cost ~~is~~ *was* a concern

When the product was originally released in November 2014, the initial prices are outrageously high for an isolate / casein mix. Quest could demand this because they’re a huge brand with die-hard fans, but we’re price sensitive here at PricePlow.

The price has come down as more retailers have picked it up, so we’re now extremely happy with everything Quest Protein Powder has to offer here.

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Here's a bonus pic of the *real* thing that was dropped by Clark, Quest's social media manager:



The real deal!

References

1. Pal, S; *Effects of whey protein isolate on body composition, lipids, insulin and glucose in overweight and obese individuals.*; School of Public Health, Curtin Health Innovation Research Institute, ATN Centre for Metabolic Fitness, Curtin University of Technology; 2010
2. Solanki, G; *Physico-chemical properties of skim milk retentates from microfiltration.*; Institute of Food Science Cornell University; 2001

3. *Ford, H; Effects of oral ingestion of sucralose on gut hormone response and appetite in healthy normal-weight subjects.; Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism, Department of Medicine, Hammersmith Campus, Imperial College London; 2011*
4. *Ma, J; Effect of the artificial sweetener, sucralose, on gastric emptying and incretin hormone release in healthy subjects.; University of Adelaide, Discipline of Medicine, Royal Adelaide Hospital; 2009*