Andreas Marggraf Encyclopedia Article

Andreas Marggraf

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1709-1782

German biologist whose discovery of sugar in sugar beets made possible a revolution in food production. Prior to this discovery, sugar was a very rare commodity, imported from overseas. The ability to grow and produce sugar locally led to a huge increase in sugar production and consumption, leading in turn to an increase in tooth decay, obesity, and other problems related to excessive sugar and caloric intake. It also was crucial to the still-widespread popularity of industries devoted to satisfying the human sweet tooth.