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Probiotic dairy products: A changing outlook from consumer and producer

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In recent years, the attention of scientific investigators has moved from the primary role of food as the source of energy and nutrients to the action of biologically active food components on human health. On the other hand, the consumer interest about the active role of food in the well-being and life prolongation has been increased. In this way, a novel term-functional food-was introduced which refers to prevention and/or curing effects of food beyond its nutritional value. There is a wide range of functional foods that were developed recently and many of them are being produced in all over the world including probiotic, prebiotic and symbiotic foods as well as foods enriched with antioxidants, isoflavones, phytosterol, anthocyanin and also foods with reduced sucrose, salt and fat content. Among these foods, probiotic functional foods may exert positive effects on the overall health. We can divide the probiotic functional foods into probiotic dairy foods and probiotic non-dairy foods. The market of probiotic dairy foods is increasing annually. An increased demand for dairy probiotic products comes from health promotion effects of probiotic bacteria that are originally initiated from milk products, bioactive compounds of fermented dairy products and prevention of lactose intolerance. Therefore, the development of these products is a key research priority for food design and a challenge for both industry and science sectors. This article presents an overview of functional foods development with emphasizing on probiotic dairy foods.

Biography

Aziz Homayouni Rad has received his PhD in Food Science and Technology Engineering at Tehran University during 2003-2007. Currently, he is working as Associate Professor in Tabriz University of Medical Sciences. He has successfully completed his administrative responsibilities as Vice Chancellor of Education in the Nutrition Faculty. His research has included functional food with emphasis on probiotic, prebiotic and synbiotic dairy foods. Based on this research and fellowship training, he has received several awards and honors, such as "Top Researcher in Nutrition Faculty of Tabriz University of Medical Sciences at 2013" and "Journal of Dairy Science Most-cited Award in Dairy Foods in 2014". He is serving as an Editorial Board Member of several reputed journals like *Journal of Food Research* and expert Reviewers for journals like "Food Chemistry" and "Nutrition". He has authored more than 80 research articles and more than 8 books. He is a member of Iranian Probiotic Association.

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