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**Advancing health and sustainability: A Holistic approach to food production and dietary habits****Grace P. Carvalho***Polytechnic Institute Of Portalegre, Portugal*

Producing healthier food requires expertise in methods that deliver benefits for human health, environmental sustainability, economic growth, cultural heritage, and overall well-being. Developing conscientious and sustainable food systems is a strategic investment to improve individual and planetary quality of life by reducing disease risk, delaying ageing, and enhancing well-being. While healthy eating begins at home, schools are critical in promoting these practices from an early age. Despite progress, significant challenges persist, emphasizing the need to prioritize food education and literacy for all ages. Understanding how sustainable food production influences personal health and societal well-being is crucial. Addressing these complexities demands a holistic framework, integrating physical, mental, social, and environmental dimensions to craft balanced, effective solutions. This approach analyzes the interactions within the food system, guiding the adoption of sustainable practices. The DM4You project exemplifies this integrated approach. It unites Portuguese partners to promote local food consumption, focusing on soups—a fundamental element of Portuguese culinary tradition. These soups, made with diverse vegetables, legumes, olive oil, and sometimes by-products, highlight regional agricultural and cultural heritage. Over three months, the project monitors 80 healthy participants to assess dietary habits, with a particular focus on soup and fruit consumption. Using a crossover study design, DM4You evaluates the impact of these dietary habits on health outcomes, providing valuable insights into sustainable and health-promoting nutrition practices. By combining scientific research and cultural preservation, DM4You demonstrates how local traditions can align with modern sustainability and health goals, offering a model for addressing global food challenges through innovative, culturally resonant solutions.

**Biography**

Grace P. Carvalho has a Ph.D. in Biology and Plant Production from the University of Extremadura in Spain (2007), and a master's degree in food science and technology from the University of Lisbon / Higher Institute of Agronomy in Portugal (1998). She has published several articles in peer-reviewed journals and participates in various projects. She is Principal Investigator in two of them, funded by the Portuguese Resilience and Resilience Programme. She works in the field(s) of food biotechnology and agricultural sciences, with a focus on dairy products and the Mediterranean Diet.