

"Standard Of Identity" For Probiotic Supplemented Foods

Editorial

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With the scientific advancement coupled with consumer's inclination towards natural and health-promoting foods, probiotic have been projected as a new nutritional additive. In recent years, probiotic supplemented foods have gained popularity but consumers are not sure whether they are paying money for the appropriate product. Market survey indicated that many probiotic supplemented foods are being sold either with no or misleading label information regarding its nutritional attributes. Presently, no

globally accepted regulations for probiotic containing foods have been established, resulting in discrepancies in views, perception and quality of foods.

Status of probiotics as a component in food is currently not established on an international basis and discrepancies exists in legislative views of different countries. Worldwide regulations related to probiotics are incoherent and assay techniques are inconsistent, therefore establishment and reinforcement of a quality assurance program to ensure "Standard of Identity" for adopting the label "Probiotic" is emerging.

Reviewing of legislative views of different countries is necessary for standardization of a quality assurance programme for the production of an optimum and uniform quality probiotic product. During policy formulation aspects like probiotic selection, product manufacturing method, packaging, storage and distribution must be considered. Universally accepted appropriate methodology for clinical trials as well as for microbial enumeration must be also stated. Food producers must get their products certified prior to its commercialization and the products must bear a label indicating all nutritional and health claims. Strict adherence to the guidelines and quality assurance program is recommended during formulation of a probiotic containing food to ensure consumers for getting an ideal food and long-term existence of probiotic food industries.