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Probiotics in food products: Behavior and challenges

Susana Marta Isay Saad

University of São Paulo, Brazil

Abstract

Nowadays, food companies are endeavouring to differentiate their products through creative segmentation and positioning strategies based on superior functionality and quality. Several types of food products were tested as matrices for the incorporation of probiotic strains. Even though yogurt and fermented milks have received the most attention as carriers of probiotic bacteria, some cheese varieties have also been studied. Cheese has been considered an important matrix to probiotic delivery because it is usually successful in improving probiotic viability throughout the GIT, due to the fat-protein matrix of cheese, as well as its buffering capacity. Dairy desserts, including frozen products, like ice-cream and frozen yoghurt, and chilled products, like mousse and pudding, are emerging as attractive options for the incorporation of probiotic cultures and prebiotic ingredients, as seen in the recent launches from the food industry, as well as in the growing number of scientific studies dealing with this subject published in the last years. The use of non-dairy matrices for probiotic incorporation is also growing and these include fruits and fruit juices, soy-based products, and other less known matrices, like margarine. Nevertheless, many challenges for incorporating and maintaining adequate viability and activity of probiotics in different food products are found and some of these aspects will be discussed.

Biography

Susana Marta Isay Saad studied Pharmacy and Biochemistry at the University of São Paulo (USP), Brazil, where she also received her Ph.D. Degree in Food Science. Since 2007, she is Associate Professor at the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, USP - Department of Biochemical and Pharmaceutical Technology, where she teaches Food Technology since 2000, for the undergraduate students of Pharmacy and of Nutrition and “Probiotic cultures: Technological applications” for Post-graduation students. Susana and her research group develop probiotic and synbiotic dairy and non-dairy products, for which they evaluate microbiological, instrumental texture, physico-chemical, and sensory features during shelf life and their probiotic and synbiotic potential through *in vitro* tests. Susana is Associate Editor of *Brazilian Journal of Microbiology*. She authored 11 chapters in books and 40 peer-reviewed publications.

susaad@usp.br