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Probiotics-enriched fruit beverages

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In recent years, people have grown accustomed to eating healthy and nourishing food. Therewithal, functional foods and nutraceuticals are being distributed and popularised in the market. For instance, the presence of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, whey protein, collagen, fibre, oligosaccharides and probiotics are preferred by people while buying food as well as new enriched food products. Furthermore, functional foods prevent nutrient deficiencies and boost the intake of nutrients. In other words, functional foods provide additional and enhanced benefits on one or more target functions of the body. Probiotics are one such form of functional food as they provide health benefits that are beyond basic nutrition. Probiotics are a dietary method that works towards improving gut microbial function through the addition of live microbes to appropriate food media. There are a lot of probiotic-dairy products with oligosaccharides, such as kefir, yoghurt and enriched milk with vitamins for children as well as probiotics-enriched non-lactose milk. As probiotics contain live microorganisms (mostly bacteria and some yeast strains), fermented milk products are generally accepted as the best carriers for probiotics. Furthermore, probiotics can last longer in dairy products as they are stored in cold environments. However, this limits the reach of probiotics to people who are lactose-intolerant or consume vegan diets. Therefore, there is a need for the production of non-dairy probiotic foods and according to the recommendations presented, it has been suggested that vegetables, grains and fruit-based beverages which are healthy and full of nutrients can also be considered as probiotic carriers. The health benefits of probiotics depend on both their concentration in food and their ability to withstand adverse conditions in the digestive process. The criteria for effective probiotics include maintaining their viability and remaining active until the end of their shelf-life. However, maintaining the viability and activity of microbes in the probiotic fruit juices requires keeping many parameters in check, such as acid level, water ratio and molecular structure. It was observed that probiotics survive in fruit juices with a pH range of 3.7-4.3. However, not every probiotic bacteria can survive in the same conditions, hence this is an issue that needs attention. Therefore, future studies in this field should investigate and develop methods for preserving the viability, activity, and improve efficiency in the production of probiotic fruit juices.

Keywords: Fruit juices, Functional foods, Probiotics, Gut health, Microbes

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