

Book Review

Functional Foods II: Claims and Evidence

J. Buttriss, M. Saltmarsh; The Royal Society of Chemistry, Inc., Cambridge, UK, 2000, xx + 244 pages, ISBN 0-85404-789-1, £59.50

Functional Foods: Claims and Evidence contains the proceedings of a joint conference held in the University of London, Kent. The theme of these proceedings is on functional foods that are said to have disease preventing and/or health promoting benefits. Recent developments, since the first conference in 1997, is reviewed in the seven plenary lectures and 19 papers put together by those in academia, industrial research and product development. It is focussed on two particular areas important to the growing market of functional foods (i) the evidence that physiologically functional foods is of benefit to human health and (ii) the consumer and regulatory background against which the market is developing.

The book contains five sections, the first of which sets the scene where it introduces factors to consider when undertaking clinical trials for functional foods. This is followed by an in depth consensus document of scientific concepts of functional foods in Europe with particular attention to the

various target functions and research opportunities in relation to health outcomes. The next section contains a plenary lecture and several papers relating to pre and probiotics. It covers the uses of probiotics and its benefit to the immune system with several papers on bovine milk, oligosaccharides and lactulose. The third section contains papers on phytoestrogens, flavanoids and other phytochemicals as functional foods. The fourth section is based on micronutrients, and includes studies on folic acid and polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFA) and finishes with a section containing numerous studies assessing the functionality of various foods, such as egg white ovumucin, cucumber, cabbage and others.

Each section is well cited with relevant references and is ideal for those working in related areas of functional foods in academic or industry.

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