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The importance of using cereals in functional foods

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In the last decades, consumer demand for functional food is growing. Consumers want not only food to satisfy their sense of hunger or sensorial pleasure, but also food that will provide them with nutrients that help improve health or prevent certain diseases. Functional foods are products that contain various biologically active compounds and which, consumed in a current diet, contribute to maintaining the optimal state of physical and mental health of the humankind. Functional foods contain a number of functional ingredients such as fibers, oligosaccharides, polyalcohols, peptides and proteins, prebiotics and probiotics, phytochemicals and antioxidants, polyunsaturated fatty acids, etc. Cereals are one of the world's main food sources. Wheat is the major cereal consumed around the world, but once refined, its nutritional qualities are decreasing. Based on these considerations, the interest in whole grains and less widely used cereals, as feedstocks for functional foods, has increased. World Health Organization reports confirm the benefits of whole grain cereal consumption as reducing the risk of non-communicable diseases (eg type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension and obesity). New trends suggest strategies and processing technologies to improve the content and bioavailability of nutrients and bioactive compounds in cereal foods. Our suggestions come with suggestions for using functional foods using cereals such as rye, oats, buckwheat, quinoa with protein additions.

Biography

Postdoctoral researcher Vlaic Romina Alina has more than 6 years' experience in exploitation of food science, development and optimization of functional food products, extraction and analysis of bioactive compounds (polyphenols, volatile oils, natural pigments, vitamins, proteins, fiber, essential fatty acids, sugars), and determination of food products quality parameters. She started the PhD stage (2012-2015) in the field of Agriculture. In 2016 and 2017 she was awarded with Excellence Diploma at the International Salon of Inventions Prominent approved by Ministry of Education and the Academy of Technical Sciences of Romania and in 2017-2018 she is responsible for 4 innovation projects.

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