

A new definition of functional food by FFC: what makes a new definition unique?

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ABSTRACT

Functional food science has gained momentum recently in response to the changing health status of developed countries. As healthcare costs and average life expectancy rise, the public has sought ways to become healthier and develop higher qualities of life. The concept of “functional food” developed as a convenient and inexpensive solution to chronic health problems, and is becoming influential in numerous branches of science and policy. Since its conception in 1984, “functional food” changed its meaning per country and culture. The term migrated from Japan to the EU and the United States where it generated profit but bred confusion among experts and non-experts. In this chapter, we review how “functional food” has been defined and redefined over the past 30 years, as well as the benefits of our current definition. The goal of this new definition is to strengthen communication between nutrition scientists, the public, and other groups as well as legitimize functional food science around the world.

Keywords: Functional foods definition; bioactive compounds; biomarkers