

Biography of biophenols: past, present and future

Hassan K. Obied

Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, School of Biomedical Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, 2678 Australia

Corresponding Author: Hassan Obied, PhD, Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, School of Biomedical Sciences, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, 2678 Australia

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ABSTRACT:

Background: The term “biophenols” was first coined by Romeo and Uccella in 1996 to denote bioactive phenols in olives replacing the more common and less chemically accurate term “polyphenols”. “Biophenols” has started gaining popularity beyond olive chemistry and currently used by researchers to refer to plant phenols in general. Biophenols constitute the largest group of secondary plant metabolites with ubiquitous presence in plants and wide spectrum of biological activities. During the last three decades, biophenols have seized scientific attention, lured industry and attracted consumers’ interest due to their antioxidative potential in preservation of food and maintaining human health. For the first time, a definition for “biophenols” has been proposed to present a more precise and comprehensive umbrella term to encompass all phenolic compounds of botanical origin. In this article, the author is tracing the landmarks of the history of biophenol research; profiling contemporary research directions; highlighting research controversies and uncertainties; and presenting an outlook of the biophenols future research.

Keywords: polyphenols, chemistry, pharmacology, biological activities, antioxidant