



Functional Foods as catalysts of the nutrition evolution into nutrigenomics: a scholastic example of a fermented papaya preparation (Immun-Âge)

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Functional Food: a recent history dating back in time

“Functional Foods” represent an emerging opportunity and the development of innovative solutions aimed at acting on organic systems as well as on more general topics relating to consumer health. This is different to previous situations, when mainly retrospective epidemiological studies or empirical experiences were carried out on single nutrients. Such a new and growing interest by the scientific community follows research deeply oriented to clinics and supplemented by an accurate study on nutrients, genomics and single nutritional requirement diagnostics. Already in 1993, Nature published a report that Japan is exploring roles between food and medicine. Clearly the success of “Functional Foods” depends also on the food industry’s capacity to develop new effective products which on the one side meet consumers’ needs and on the other must have positive effects on health, supported and validated by scientific research and therefore far beyond a simplistic claim of positive properties, as recently outlined in a meeting, organised by a non profit, non governmental international association.