

Abstract of Presentation

Presentation Title(Should be no more than 20 words):

Acceptance of Soybean Food Products in Japan
- From Traditional Foods to Modern Functional Foods -

Abstract :

It is widely accepted, in the Western countries (particularly USA) as well as the Asian countries including Japan, that soybean has the health-promotion effects such as a cholesterol-reducing ability. Since each component of soybean such as protein, peptide, lipid, isoflavon, oligosaccharide, polysaccharide (dietary fiber), etc., has unique functions and health-promotion ability, the structure and function of these components have been investigated extensively. The development of functional foods including soybean components have been intensively promoted by food, chemical and pharmaceutical companies, too. In this presentation, I introduce the recent progress in the fundamental research and application on soybean components in Japan. Since Dr. Hirotsuka already explained the details of some components, especially physiological benefits of soy proteins and peptides at the first Japan-Argentina Workshop last year, I would like to focus on the other components such as polysaccharides. I also intend to make an overview of the functional foods including soybean components recently developed in Japan.

Japanese people have been enjoying a variety of traditional soybean food products such as Tofu (soybean curd), Natto (fermented soybean), Miso (soybean paste), Yuba (soybean film), etc., from old times. These soybean food products are well balanced in terms of component. For the fermented foods, it is likely that some components are changed to be metabolites with the enhanced absorption efficiency and superior bio-functions by microorganisms. Newly developed analytical methods shed light on the traditional soybean food products thereby causing the constant accumulation of new findings on the functions and qualities of these products. In this presentation, I hope to have a discussion with the members of the workshop on the possibility that these traditional soybean food products become acceptable world-widely after the modification of their properties and qualities according to the new findings.