

Special Issue

Functional Foods and Active Natural Products

Message from the Guest Editor

Functional foods enriched with bioactive compounds are a rapidly advancing area of food and nutrition science. Established fortification agents such as carotenoids, phytosterols and stanols, omega-3, and other fatty acids, proteins and peptides, fibers and prebiotics, probiotics, vitamins, coenzymes, and minerals already demonstrate well-documented benefits for health promotion and disease prevention. At the same time, novel and emerging bioactives are reshaping the functional food space. These include marine- and aquatic-derived metabolites (e.g., algal compounds, peptides, sulfated polysaccharides), rare or non-canonical plant phytochemicals (flavonoids, glucosinolates, phytoalexins, small RNAs), and precision fermentation or synthetic biology products (engineered enzymes, microbial pigments, human-identical molecules). Advances in delivery technologies such as encapsulation, nanostructured carriers, pickering emulsions, postbiotics, and microbiome-directed metabolites further enhance bioavailability, stability, and targeted action.

Guest Editor

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

As the world of science becomes ever more specialized, researchers may lose themselves in the deep forest of the ever increasing number of subfields being created. This open access journal *Applied Sciences* has been started to link these subfields, so researchers can cut through the forest and see the surrounding, or quite distant fields and subfields to help develop his/her own research even further with the aid of this multi-dimensional network.

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