

Nutraceuticals to be Halal for its Penetration in the Muslim Community

Dear Editor,

The food containing beneficiary components for health has been the priority in the human diet and the main focus of the nutritional industry. Research on the nutritional products provides evidence for food and their components in providing benefits to health. Nutritional components of food exhibit the ability in disease prevention. Nutraceuticals have gained a wide area of research in health sciences as well as in the nutritional industry. The first food components to be used as nutraceutical were probably the cereal brans. Cereal brans were found to have chemopreventive activity for colon cancer. Nutraceuticals also play an important role in immune modulation. The optimum function of the immune system relays on an adequate intake of nutraceuticals by the human body.

Nutraceuticals are often found as nutrient premixers in some products as nutrient composition. In 2006, Burrill et al. reported the statistics of the volume of nutraceuticals occupying the global market for USD to 210 billion. The division of nutraceuticals present in different forms in the market can be given as follows: 37% functional food, 32% health supplements, 22% organic foods, and 9% of the products for personal care. With the passage of time, the share of nutraceuticals in the market increased progressively. The nutraceuticals are penetrating the major share of the market, so they must have some parameters to be set when used in the Muslim world. The nutraceuticals composition must be according to the Muslim edible specifications when used by Muslim consumers. The halal and haram terminologies are used by Muslims to classify the food/edible items. The Muslims consumed the food items, which are according to the dietary code of Islam. Halal foods are allowed to be consumed by Muslims. The food items forbidden to be used for eating purposes are called as haram. The Muslim consumers prioritize the consumable items if available in the category of halal.^[1-5]

Recommendations for the development of a system regarding halal nutraceuticals:

1. For the assurance of halal nutraceuticals, there must be a certifying body, whose responsibility is to certify and reassure the contents as to be halal in the nutraceuticals.
2. The nutraceuticals claimed to be halal must have certification of halal contents, when importing those edibles internationally.
3. Development of standard guidelines for the halal nutraceuticals. These guidelines address the qualitative and quantitative assays/analyses of halal nutraceuticals as the standard set for pharmaceutical ingredients.
4. The standard guidelines developed at the national level should be comparable and showing compliance with the international standards set for halal nutraceuticals.
5. There should be an agency/organization/department for the implementation of rules and regulations regarding halal nutraceuticals and also monitor it.

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Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest

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