

A Review of Biotechnological Applications in Food Processing of Animal Origin

Mahendra Pal¹, A.S. Patel², A.R. Bariya², Vikram Godishala³, Venkataramana Kandi^{4*}

¹Narayan Consultancy on Veterinary Public Health and Microbiology, 4 Aangan, Jagnath- Ganesh Dairy Road, Anand, Gujarat, India

²Department of Livestock Products Technology, College of Veterinary Science, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh, India

³Department of Biotechnology, Vaagdevi Degree and PG College, Warangal, Telangana India

⁴Department of Microbiology, Prathima Institute of Medical Sciences, Karimnagar, Telangana, India

*Corresponding author: ramana_20021@rediffmail.com

Abstract Biotechnology opens numerous opportunities for the food industry. Biotechnological approaches are applied to enhance the nutritional, functional and sensory attributes of food in milk, meat, fish and beverage processing industries. The targeted use of biotechnological methods can, amongst other things, help reduce the quantity and number of unhealthy ingredients in foods as well as remove allergenic substances. Food biotechnology, therefore, contributes significantly to saving resources, optimizing harvest yields and producing healthy and better foods. People have used the properties of microorganisms and their enzymes in food production consciously for thousands of years. Biotechnology has helped in the development of food processing. It can also fight the current challenges of global food and nutritional insecurity. The purpose of this communication is to delineate the importance of biotechnology, and its industrial applications in the processing of foods of animal origin.

Keywords: *biotechnology, food industry, food biotechnology, food production, industrial applications, animal origin*

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1. Introduction

Biotechnology is a diverse field of science, which has been instrumental in human development ever since life has evolved. Historically, it could be dated back to 4000 BC, when man had started using microbes to produce bread and wine. Basically, it integrates human, animals, and microorganisms with the technology for the betterment of life. The research in cell biology, animal sciences, environmental sciences, plant sciences, agriculture, food, and medicine are among a few important areas where biotechnology, and its applications play a key role [1].

Pharmaceutical industry is another area where biotechnology has given a great boost, and has played an important role in the discovery of antimicrobial agents [2]. Production of quality food, paper from the trees (Biopulping), synthesizing fuel from various raw materials, and selective breeding (Bioplastics) with minimal cost and pollution are other significant contributions of biotechnology. Major tools of biotechnology include tissue culture, selective breeding, fermentation, DNA finger printing, and recombinant DNA technology [3-8]. Biotechnology also finds its place in the diagnosis of various genetic disorders, and infectious diseases, by allowing complete genetic/DNA analysis, thereby finding ways to treat them [9-13].

Food processing can be defined as the application of various operations and technologies to convert relatively

bulky, perishable and typically inedible raw food materials into more useful shelf-stable and palatable foods or potable beverages [14]. In the present era, there is a growing concern about production of low cost, healthy, safe, nutritious, and value-added food products to improve human health.

2. Biotechnological Applications in Food Industry

There are various food processing sectors where the biotechnological tools can be applied for betterment of the food products. These aspects include increasing the yield of food, improve the nutrition value, use of fermentation process to yield different food products, producing important enzymes, increase the shelf life, improving the organoleptic properties of food, and to enhance the food safety [15,16].

2.1. Biotechnology to Increase the Yield of Food

Transgenesis includes manipulation of a gene of one organism in to another organism of same or other species in a way that the gene is both expressed, and is also transferred to the next generation [17,18]. Fish, mice, rats, pigs, sheep, rabbits, cows etc. are examples of transgenic animals, which have been developed with the aid of

biotechnology [19]. Genetically engineered (GE) salmon fish produced with increased growth rate, disease resistance and improved environmental tolerance than its non-GE farm-raised Atlantic salmon counterpart [20,21]. GE salmon fish for was approved as a safe and healthy food for human consumption by US FDA (United states, food and drug administration). Introduction of extra copies of the genes encoding bovine β - and κ -casein into female bovine fibroblasts revealed that milk produced from such animals had 8-20% increase in β -casein, two times increase in κ -casein levels, and a clearly altered κ -casein to total casein ratio [22]. Transgenic swine was developed by inserting plant gene, which revealed high level of unsaturated fatty acid in their muscle mass and considered as healthy pork [23]. The Rendement and Napole (RN) and Halothane (N) genes were related to meat quality in pigs, and the myostatin gene, was associated with double-muscling in cattle. In poultry, growth traits were associated with poly-morphisms in the ghrelin, lambr1, growth hormone, growth hormone receptor, MC3R, MC4R, IGF-II, TGF- β [24-32].

2.2. Biotechnology to Improve the Nutritional Value of Foods

Every food item does not contain all essential components so every food is not possessing perfect nutrition. With the advances in the biotechnology, bio-fortification of foods using technologies such as recombinant DNA technology and fermentation procedures is gaining advantage in the industry [33]. Designer foods are normal foods fortified with health promoting ingredients [34]. The term was introduced in Japan in 1980s for referring processed food containing nutrient conferring of some additional health benefits apart from its own nutritional value [35]. Designer egg approach was started in 1934 by Cruickshank, who reported the modification of fatty acid composition in egg yolk by making feed interventions [36]. These omega-3 fatty acids enriched designer eggs showed better stability of PUFA during egg storage and cooking, high availability of such nutrients as vitamin E, carotenoids and selenium, which improves antioxidant and omega-3 status of people consuming these eggs [37]. Previously, researchers had developed a variety of designer egg, which was rich in omega-3 fatty acids and antioxidants [38]. Research by Raes et al. produced a designer egg, which was enriched with conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) [39]. Designer eggs with enhanced vitamin A and β -carotene concentrations were also developed [40]. Designer milk developed by biotechnological applications may have a primary structure of casein, alteration in the lipid profile to include healthier fatty acids such as CLA and omega-fats. Such milk contains improved amino acid profiles, more protein, less lactose and devoid of β -lactoglobulin (β -LG) [41]. Previous study has also demonstrated that, by eliminating the β -LG gene from bovines, cow milk allergy in children could also be reduced [42]. Reports also suggested that selenium (Se)-enriched chicken, pork and beef can also be produced by feeding organic Se in the diet of poultry and farm animals [43]. Designer food or functional foods are gaining greater importance due to their role in disease prevention and health promotion [44].

2.3. Biotechnological Application in Fermentation Process

In commercial fermentation processes, to produce different value added fermented foods, starter cultures have been developed to utilize as inoculants. "Starter cultures" made up of single or mixed strains of microorganisms have been found beneficial [45]. Inhibitory activity of these cultures was noted due to the production of one or several substances such as diacetyl, bacteriocins, hydrogen peroxide, and organic acids [46]. Protoplast fusion, cloning, plasmid transfer, and transduction of defined starter cultures were used to explore possibilities to improve anti-cholesterolemic property, defense, resistant against enteropathogenic microorganism, and anti-carcinogenic activities of livestock foods [47]. The fermented dairy products have very good health benefits and influence the intestinal health [48]. *Lactobacillus* strains can be used as potential probiotics for the preparation of fermented dairy and meat products having great health importance [49]. So, the biotechnological tools can be used to produce improved strains of bacteria, yeast, and moulds, which can be used for the preparation of fermented meat and dairy products.

2.4. Biotechnological Applications to Produce Enzymes

Humans have been utilizing enzymes throughout the ages, either in the form of vegetables rich in enzymes, or as microorganisms employed for a variety of purposes, for example in cheese production, baking, and brewing [50]. Today, microorganisms are an important source of commercial enzymes. Biotechnology encompasses the most accurate methods to produce enzymes by optimizing microorganisms. These methods are used to acquire high-yielding enzyme producing organisms [51].

In past decade calf rennet obtained from the fourth stomach of suckling calves was used in cheese manufacturing process. The recent growth in the cheese industry and the scarcity of calf rennet has enthused the research workers for milk clotting enzyme from alternative sources. With the availability of biotechnological tools, many microorganisms are now used to produce proteinases, which can substitute the calf rennet [52]. Microorganisms like *Rhizomucor miehei*, *Aspergillus oryzae*, *Rhizomucor pusillus*, *Irpex lactis*, and *Endothia parasitica* are extensively used for rennet production by cheese manufacturers [53,54]. The aspartyl protease from *Mucor miehei* is commonly used as a chymosin substitute in cheese making [55].

Some individuals might have lactose intolerance and intricacy in consuming milk and dairy products due to less efficiency of intestinal enzyme i.e. β -galactosidase. Some researchers had produced microbial met from different organisms to make it commercially available with low-cost [56]. Successful efforts were made to produce β -galactosidase from *Aspergillus niger* ATCC 9142, *Aspergillus oryzae*, and from *Kluyveromyces lactis* NRRL Y-8279 using response surface methodology [57-59]. Lipases (triacylglycerol acylhydrolases) have been produced by microorganisms individually or together with esterases [60]. Lipase producing microorganisms include: *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*, *Serratia*

marcescens, *Staphylococcus aureus*, and *Bacillus subtilis*. Previous reports have noted that various animal or microbial lipases were used to make pronounced cheese flavor, with low bitterness, and strong rancidity, while lipases in combination with proteinases and/or peptidases gave good cheese flavor with low levels of bitterness [61].

2.5. Biotechnology to Increase Shelf Life of Food

Since long time, shelf life of food and beverages are extended by bacterial fermentation of perishable raw materials [62]. Most of the food fermentations involve conversion of sugars to lactic acid by lactic acid bacteria (LAB, which include the genera of *Streptococcus*, *Lactococcus*, *Lactobacillus* and *Pediococcus*). *Lactobacilli* have gained attention nowadays, due to the production of bacteriocins [63]. These substances can be applied in the food industry as natural preservatives. The use of LAB and of their metabolic products is generally considered as safe (GRAS, Grade One) [64]. By providing controlled environment to a specific bacterial culture, bacteriocins of the choice can be obtained. Nisin is the only bacteriocin that has been officially employed in the food industry and its use has been approved worldwide [65]. Not only the use of nisin-producing lactic acid bacteria (LAB) as a fermentation starter culture but also the direct addition of nisin to various kinds of foods, such as cheese, margarine, flavored milk, canned foods, and so on, is permitted [66]. Pediocin PA-1 is another bacteriocin from LAB, which is widely distributed and is more potent in inhibiting the growth of several pathogens associated with food spoilage and food related health hazards so can be explore as a potential food bio-preservative agent [67]. Many refrigerated vacuum-packaged processed food products from meat, dairy, fish and vegetable groups contain normally psychrotropic Gram-positive bacterial strains from the genera of *Leuconostoc*, *Lactobacillus*, *Carnobacterium*, *Brochothrix* and *Clostridium* [68]. They are capable of multiplying at refrigerated temperature and causing spoilage of the product. By incorporating pediocin PA-1/AcH during the formulation of the raw product, spoilage problems in the final product could be reduced. Reduction in *Listeria* count was achieved following addition of *Lactobacillus sakei* culture in chilled raw ground meat and chilled cured pasteurized sliced vacuum-packed meats [69-73].

2.6. Biotechnology to Enhance Organoleptic Characteristics of Food

The organoleptic quality of the food can have significant effect in acceptance of food and food products by consumer. The techniques of genetics (selection, molecular biology, transgenesis) and the biotechnologies will play a major role in the evolution of quality mainly for the chemical-nutritional and technological characteristics and for some organoleptic aspects [74]. Microbial cultures used in food production are often referred to as starter cultures that can also enhance the organoleptic quality of foods. A previous research has noted that more than 100 commercial aroma chemicals are derived using biotechnology [75]. Fermented foods are value added

products which have higher nutrients, prolong shelf life and easy in digestibility and are more suitable for the intestinal tract [74]. The organoleptic qualities of such foods are higher particularly in terms of flavor, taste, aroma and color [76]. The attraction of producing flavor and color by biotechnology is great. Recombinant DNA technologies have also enhanced efficiency in the production of non-nutritive sweeteners such as aspartame and thaumatin [77]. There is no doubt that some microorganisms can produce flavor and color in food products. The lactic acid bacteria represent a group of genetically diverse but functionally related microorganisms, and are used in the production of a diverse range of foods. The former group, producing much of fermented milk products, includes *Lactococcus lactis* Ssp.*lactis* and *L. lactis* Ssp.*cremoris*, and *Leuconostoc mesenteroides* and *L.dextranicum*. These mesophiles (optimum growth temperature of approximately 30°C) are used to manufacture cheeses such as, Cheddar, Gouda, Camembert, and Cottage, cultured butter, cultured buttermilk and sour cream. The latter group includes *Lactobacillus delbruekii* sp.*bulgaricus*, *Lactobacillus helveticus* and *Streptococcus thermophilus*. These organisms are producing diacetyl compound that is responsible for flavor. These are used in various combinations to produce yoghurt, acidophilus milk and high scalded cheeses such as Emmental, Gruyere and Italian types [78]. At the time of fermentation of sausage some aroma producing volatile compounds were formed from carbohydrate catabolism such as acetic, propionic and butyric acids, acetaldehyde, diacetyl, acetoin, 2, 3-butandiol, ethanol, acetone, 2-propanol and more [79].

2.7. Biotechnological Applications to Enhance Food Safety

Unforeseen and inadvertent compositional changes occur with all forms of genetically engineered foods. The European Food Safety Authority has concluded that bacteria used for or in feed production might pose a risk to human and animal health because of carrying acquired resistance genes [80]. Ensuring as satisfactory level of food quality and safety is utterly indispensable to endow with adequate safeguard for consumers and to facilitate trade. Careful monitoring of microbial contamination in the final product as well as monitoring of the production process and cleaning and sanitation is one of the most essential factors of the manufacturing process in food technology and biotechnology [81]. Proteomics and genomics technologies offer further, more sensitive and specific methods for recognition of microbial food contaminants and their toxins. Various powerful tools of biotechnology, which have already made enormous advances, include genetic engineering, PCR (polymerase chain reaction), random amplified polymorphic DNA (RAPD), amplified fragment length polymorphism (AFLP), rDNA technology, MALDI-TOF MS (matrix associated laser desorption ionization-time of flight mass spectroscopy) etc. [82]. These methods can also help in meat authentication and to check meat speciation. Expansion and development of new novel methods for rapid revealing of emerging high-risk food pathogens in livestock foods is tremendously imperative in context of food safety.

3. Conclusion

Biotechnology has already made significant contributions to livestock, and food industry. Modern biotechnology is helpful in enhancing taste, yield, shelf life, and nutritive values of food. It is also useful in food processing (fermentation and enzyme involving processes). Hence, biotechnology can be used for the benefit of human health, and eliminate hunger, malnutrition and diseases from people living in developing countries, and poor countries. It is imperative to consider any potential human health or environmental risks when foods are developed using biotechnology. It is emphasized to undertake further research for improvement in safety of processed food products. Embracing the potential of biotechnological applications should be done cautiously, keeping in mind the natural ecological niche.

Conflict of Interest

Nil.

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