FEATURES | FEATURE

Probiotics- A future promise in India

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By **Guest** | October 14, 2014



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Probiotics are widely used globally due to advancement in the relationship between nutrition and health besides their promising therapeutic benefits and negligible side effects. Probiotics comprise of approximately 65% of the world functional food market. Probiotics are available both as food (to improve health) and as drugs (to treat a specific medical condition).

Indian probiotic industry is still evolving with opportunities for rapid growth in the near future. India being the largest producer of milk and having world's highest cattle population has a distinct advantage in the probiotic field. Indian probiotic industry is expected to be more than double by 2015 from its current size in 2011. Indian probiotic market valued at $12 million in 2011, is expected to witness a CAGR of 11% by 2016. Nestle, Amul, Yakult Danone and Mother Dairy are the major brands producing probiotics in India along with other minor players operating in different regions in their own capacities. In Maharashtra, in Vidarbha region, Dinshaw Dairy Food Products, Nagpur, is one of the companies producing probiotics dahi.

Allianz Biosciences (ABPL) manufactures probiotic formulations for many pharma majors in India. In its pursuit to probiotics and focus on probiotics, ABPL currently manufactures probiotics for human health, functional food and animal health. Some of the products manufactured by ABPL are:

Gastro Intestinal Health - Pre & Probiotics:

- BIFILAC capsules/ sachets marketed by Tablets India
- ViBact capsules/ sachets marketed by USV
- Binifit capsules/ sachets marketed by Ranbaxy
- Becelac PB capsules marketed by Dr Reddy's Labs
- Vizyl capsules/ sachets marketed by Unichem
- Gutpro capsules/ sachets marketed by JBCPL

Urogenital Probiotics:

- Ecoflora capsules marketed by Tablets India
- Econova capsules marketed by Glenmark

Probiotics with ORS:

- Biors sachets marketed by Tablets India

Feed probiotics for poultry (Ecodyne) & aquaculture (Ecoforce)

Milk and milk products occupy a very prominent place in food sector and economy of India. The consumption pattern of milk is such that 46% of milk is consumed in liquid form, followed by 34% in the form of ghee and butter. Dahi, khoa and paneer consume 15% and the balance 5% goes into the manufacturing of western dairy products. With 27% of Asia's population, India accounts for more than half of Asia's milk products. Asian dairy markets are growing. For example, Japan has trebled its per capita milk consumption from 20kg per annum to 70kg. Currently India's exports are limited to small quantities of ghee to Gulf countries, buttermilk to Bangladesh and very small quantities of traditional milk sweets. Short-term prospects for export expansion are primarily in milk powder, butter and ghee, which can be expanded to probiotic food in which Probiotic Association of India can play a major role.

The future of probiotic food is even promising, as modern consumers are worried to maintain their personal health, and expect the food that they eat to be healthy and capable of preventing illness. It is expected that probiotic yogurt sales will cross 1,00,000 thousand packets by 2015. Probiotic drink sales volume is likely to reach a little less than 1,00,000 thousand bottles by the year 2015.

Although there are formidable challenges to be encountered, the prospects of the market

expanding in a steadfast way look bright. As probiotics are not previewed under any health related law in India and with Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) still framing the guidelines for probiotic sales (ICMR status report on probiotics, 2009), probiotics face no hindrance from government health officials on its sales. The targeted translation of science for consumer benefit coupled with effective regulations will play an important role for paving the path for probiotic use.

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