



BioMed Research International

Special Issue on
Natural Food Additives

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In the last few years, consumer studies have shown that most of people demand healthier food products with functional ingredients and without food additives or natural food additives over synthetic ones. This contributes to an increasing use and demand for natural food additives. The European Food Safety Authority's (EFSA) definition for food additive is "any substance not normally consumed as a food itself and not normally used as a characteristic ingredient of a food, whether or not it has nutritive value, the intentional addition of which to a food for a technological purpose in the manufacture, processing, preparation, and so forth of such food results, or may reasonably be expected to result, in it or its by-products becoming directly or indirectly a component of such food." In Europe, food additives are divided into 26 functional classes, depending on their function in food, among them preservatives, colorants, flavouring agents, carriers, acidity regulators, and so forth. They could be also classified in natural additives (obtained directly from animals or plants); similar to natural additives (produced synthetically imitating natural ones); modified from natural (natural additives that are then chemically modified); and finally artificial additives (synthetic compounds). In most cases, currently authorized food additives are based on synthetic/artificial compounds being the natural ones used in a less extension.

Contributions for this issue, in form of both original research and review articles, may cover all aspects of natural food additives, both currently authorized or potential ones obtained from natural food matrices, namely, powerful phytochemicals and bioactive compounds widely found in vegetable sources, mainly in terms of preservatives (antioxidant and antimicrobial activity), colouring agents, natural sweeteners, and so forth.

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Biochemical characterization of natural matrices as potential sources of food additives, such as preservatives, colorants, flavouring agents, and sweeteners
- ▶ Analytical technologies applied to natural food additives: extraction optimization, chemical characterization, and structural elucidation
- ▶ Recent advances in health benefits and mechanisms of action of natural food additives
- ▶ Toxicity of authorized or potential natural food additives
- ▶ Application of natural food additives in foodstuffs obtained from natural matrices or as isolated compounds
- ▶ Bioactivity of natural food additives applied to foodstuffs
- ▶ Stability of natural food additives along self-life: reactivity and structure elucidation

Authors can submit their manuscripts via the Manuscript Tracking System at <http://mts.hindawi.com/submit/journals/bmri/biochemistry/nfad/>.

Lead Guest Editor

Patricia Morales, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Madrid, Spain
patricia.morales@farm.ucm.es

Guest Editors

Isabel C.F.R. Ferreira, Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Bragança, Portugal
iferreira@ipb.pt

Lillian Barros, Polytechnic Institute of Bragança, Bragança, Portugal
lillian@ipb.pt

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