

Functional Food Industry in Thailand: Perspectives from Government, Education, and Private Sector

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Abstract : With increasing aging population and health conscious consumers, the demand for health promoting products such as functional foods, dietary supplements, and nutraceutical products has continuously increased in Thailand. Nevertheless, the strategic framework for regulatory functional food developments in Thailand is still unclear. The objective of this study was to survey stakeholders' perspectives on three scopes, consisting of 1) the current status 2) obstacles, and 3) future trend for the development and production of functional foods in Thailand. A survey was conducted by interviewing ten experts from governmental organization, industrial sector and academic institute. The obtained results show that there is no established definition for functional foods in Thailand. There is a variety of raw materials that are capable to be potential ingredients for functional food production in Thailand and exported to global market. However, the scaling up technology into a commercial production is limited. Moreover, there is a need to establish the infrastructures, such as testing laboratory, and regulatory standards for quality control and ensuring product safety. This information is useful for government in the development of the strategic framework and policy statement on improvement of functional food industry in Thailand.

Keywords : functional foods, interview, perspective, Thailand

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