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## **Current Status and Prospect of Nutraceuticals**

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Food industry companies have rather high expectations in food products that meet the consumer's demand for a healthy life style. In this context nutraceuticals play a specific role. These foods are not intended only to satisfy hunger and provide humans with necessary nutrients, but also to prevent nutrition-related diseases (like cancer, hypertension and diabetes mellitus etc.) and increase physical and mental well-being of consumers. The global market of nutraceuticals is estimated to at least 65 billion US\$ in 1997. The most important and dynamic market represents the USA, Europe and Japan with an estimated market share of more than 85%. In the world, the market is differentiated in functional food with specific health claims achieving a turnover of at least 138 billion US\$ in 2000. As the market is growing quickly, it appears that the selling arguments are rarely based on scientific evidence, which has led people to question the reliability and safety of functional foods. Thus, nutraceuticals business has gained such immense importance for the food industry in a relatively short time.