Abstract

Objective: To assess differences in functional foods consumption between European countries. Design: Systematic review. The literature search was conducted in Medlars Online International Literature (MEDLINE), via PubMed© and Scopus. Twenty two studies were identified to examine the differences in functional food consumption between European countries. Results: Figures on consumers of functional foods reveal differences across European countries. Functional foods are popular in most of European countries like Finland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain and Cyprus, but not so in other countries like Denmark, Italy and Belgium. A high percentage of adolescents in the European Mediterranean countries (Spain and Cyprus, but not Italy) consume functional foods. Evaluation of functional foods consumption according to gender is difficult, because results differ from one study to another. Conclusions: Functional foods have become very popular in Europe in recent years, but still huge differences exist between Europeans on consumption of functional foods. Further research is needed to find out the reasons behind these differences and to understand consumers’ needs for functional foods. (Nutr Hosp. 2014;29:470-478) DOI:10.3305/NH.2014.29.3.7148

Keywords