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Bacteria From Craft Goat Cheese Could Be Beneficial For Health

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A research work carried out at the department of Microbiology of the University of Granada has carried out an analysis of the DNA extracted from different varieties of craft goat's cheese, determining that most of them belong to the group of lactic bacteria, which could have important technological and functional properties, and be even beneficial for health. The doctoral thesis by Antonio M. Martín Platero has been supervised by Professors Manuel Martínez Bueno, Mercedes Maqueda and Eva Valdivia, and is the first research work carried out around Andalusian cheese through the combination of classic and molecular techniques and/or methodologies.

In order to carry out this work, they have analyzed four varieties of craft cheese from the Alpujarra (Granada), Jayena (Granada) and Aracena (Huelva). The microbiological analysis carried out at the University of Granada has revealed that this cheese possess between 107 and 109 bacteria per gram of cheese, and between 65 and 99 per cent of them are LAB (Lactic Acid Bacteria).

Lactic acid, beneficial for health

Martín Platero highlights that this type of bacteria "could be especially beneficial for human health, as they cause fermentation in lactose, acidify the PH and therefore prevent development of pathogen microorganisms". Part of the microorganisms produce numerous antimicrobial compounds of protein nature known as bacteriocines, very active substances against pathogens and other microorganisms which alter food.

According to the study carried out at the UGR, the most abundant species found in such craft cheese are *Lactobacillus paracasei*, *Lb. plantarum* and *Lactococcus lactis*. The latter is one of the species most commonly found in yoghurt.

The results of this work have been partially published in the scientific journals *Applied and Environmental Microbiology*, *International Journal of Food Microbiology* and *Analytical Biochemistry*.

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