

## SMC College of Dairy Science organized Probiotic Awareness Day – a contest for School Children



Probiotics has made considerable impact on human population owing to their health benefits. SMC College of Dairy Science, Anand Agricultural University in association with Gut Microbiota and Probiotic Science Foundation, India and SASANET-Fermented foods organised “**PROBIOTIC AWARENESS DAY**”- An awareness programme and contest for school children on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

The programme aimed at increasing awareness among school children about probiotics, their health benefits and probiotic foods. The Oral presentation contest was on “Role of Probiotics or Friendly bacteria in Human Health”. Twenty two schools from Anand and around enthusiastically participated in the event.

Dr. J. B. Prajapati, Principal & Dean in his welcome address said that he was highly overwhelmed by the performance of students. He defined probiotics as live microorganisms which when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host'. He clarified that all beneficial bacteria are not probiotic. Also probiotics are specific strains of microbes which have atleast one clinically proven health benefit. He also spoke on initiative taken by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) along with the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) to formulate guidelines for regulation of probiotic products in the country. These guidelines define a set of parameters required for a product/strain to be termed as 'probiotic' which include identification of the strain, in vitro screening for probiotic characteristics, animal studies to establish safety and in vivo animal and human studies to establish efficacy. The guidelines also include requirements for labelling of the probiotic products with strain specification, viable numbers at the end of shelf life, storage conditions, etc., which would be helpful to the consumers to safeguard their own interest.

Dr. Neerja Hajela, Secretary, Gut Microbiota and Probiotic Science Foundation (GMPSF, India) also commented the event as very meaningful and performance of school students very outstanding. She added that, GMPSF established on 9<sup>th</sup> November 2011, works with an objective to create awareness and knowledge about gut microbiota and probiotics in the country, through symposia, seminars, books and collaborative research. Dr Neerja also highlighted the influence of gut microbiota on human immunity and on our thinking process. Mr. Tomoyuki Iwama, Director - Production & Science, Yakult Danone India Pvt Ltd, also attended the programme.

Dr. J. M. Dave, former Dean, Faculty of Dairy Science also endorsed that the benefits of probiotics need to be clinically proven through human trials. He also added that probiotic is very intricate and the benefits of consuming probiotic foods are influenced by many factors including, age, intestinal microflora, food habits, etc. He also threw light on the contributions made by Department of Dairy Microbiology, SMC College of Dairy science in the field of probiotics.



Dr. A. A. Patel, Director of Extension in his presidential address stressed on importance of probiotic food in the present scenario where consumers, especially the adolescents are highly calorie conscious. He also spoke on various research activities of Anand Agricultural University including biofertilizers as well as on probiotic strains isolated by Dairy Microbiology Department. He appealed the students to plant and rear a tree to counter the danger of climate change.





The winners were given cash prizes, trophies and certificates. The award winning teams were as under:

	English Medium Schools	Gujarati Medium Schools
<b>First Prize</b>	Swaminarayan Vidhyapith, Karamsad (Presenter: Ms. Radha Barad)	Sardar Vallabhnbhai Patel High School (Presenter: Mr. Jigar N. Prajapati)
<b>Second Prize</b>	P. M. International School, Borsad (Presenter Mr. Anshul Thakkar)	Salvation Army William Booth Memorial High School, Anand (Presenter: Mr. Ronak Khristi)
<b>Third Prize</b>	Shristi English Medium School, Anand (Presenter: Ms. Vaisvi V. Patel)	D.N. High School, Anand (Presenter: Mr. Parthiv B. Parekh)
<b>Consolation Prize</b>	Zen School, Bakrol (Presenter: Ms. Tejaswini Captain)	

The jury comprised of 2 scientists and 2 doctors. Dr. J. M. Dave, Former Dean, Faculty of Dairy Science, Dr. R. K. Shah, Retired Professor, SMC College of Dairy Science, Dr. Manisha Gohel, Pramukh Swami Medical College and Dr. Rupal, Pramukh Swami Medical College, Karamsad Hospital.

During the break, the probiotic drink Yakult as well as Probiotic chocobar from Amul were served to all participants. Two films, educating on role of probiotics were shown on this occasion. Dr. Sreeja V, Organizing Secretary and Assistnat Professor of Dairy Microbiology proposed vote of thanks.

