

manufacturers and consumers. The Functional Food Center's proposed 17-step regulation process provides a structured approach, emphasizing scientific validation and transparent communication. However, the lengthy FDA approval timeline and the lack of a dedicated category for functional foods underscore significant hurdles in the industry. Drawing inspiration from the efficient kosher labeling system, the Functional Food Center jointly with the Academic Society of Functional Foods and Bioactive Compounds could serve as a certification agency for functional foods. By evaluating products and granting approval, the Functional Food Center would establish credibility, similar to consumers' trust in kosher symbols. This approach not only streamlines the approval process but also ensures the availability of reliable functional foods, benefiting both public health and industry innovation. Through these efforts, a transparent, credible, and regulated functional food market can be achieved, meeting the evolving health needs of consumers.

In addressing the thorny issue of protecting patenting for manufacturers and researchers, it is crucial to underscore the role of intellectual property rights in fostering innovation. As functional foods gain prominence, researchers should actively pursue patent applications to secure exclusive rights, providing a foundation for collaboration with manufacturers. This strategic approach not only protects the intellectual property of innovators but also enhances fundraising potential by showcasing the uniqueness and market potential of patented products. As a further research suggestion, a comprehensive examination of patent strategies within the evolving landscape of functional foods can be conducted. By aligning regulatory initiatives with robust patent protection, we can create a harmonious environment that not only meets the health

needs of consumers but also fuels the growth and sustainability of the functional food industry.

Abbreviations: FDA: Food and Drug Administration, GRAS: Generally Recognized as Safe, FFC: Functional Food Center, FFP: Functional Food Product, EC: European Commission, EFSA: European Food Safety Authority, CAA: Consumer Affairs Agency, FOSHU: Foods for Specified Health Uses, ASFFBC: Academic society for Functional Foods and Bioactive Compounds

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