

The role of rabbit meat as functional food

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Abstract

Increasing consumer knowledge of the link between diet and health has raised the awareness and demand for functional food ingredients. Meat and its derivatives may be considered functional foods to the extent that they contain numerous compounds thought to be functional. This review will attempt to outline the excellent nutritional and dietetic properties of rabbit meat and offer an overview of the studies performed on the strategies adopted to improve the functional value of rabbit meat. Dietary manipulation has been seen to be very effective in increasing the levels of essential FA, EPA, DHA, CLA, branched chain FA, vitamin E, and selenium in rabbit meat. Dietary fortification with vitamin E or natural products such as oregano essential oil, chia seed oil, and *Spirulina platensis* microalga seem promising in improving the oxidative stability of rabbit meat while also adding functional ingredients.

Key words: Meat quality, Functional meat, Functional compounds

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