

Presentation abstracts

Kishk sa'eedi, intellectual property rights for the Egyptian producers and market access to the EU

Kishk sa'eedi, propriété intellectuelle des producteurs égyptiens et accès aux marchés européens

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A traditional fermented cereal-based food made from whole wheat and buttermilk, Kishk Sa'eedi (KS) of Egypt is a millennial food that is home produced in five Governorates of the south of Egypt. It is little known to Egyptians outside the limits of its production area, and in turn, nearly unheard of outside Egypt. Extensively investigated and researched within the European funded "AFTER" FP7 project (African Food Tradition rEvisited by Research) KS revealed appreciable marketable qualities as a safe food of high nutritive value with a long shelf life, a low cost source of quality proteins, as well as possessing certain health attributes. More importantly, it satisfies the passion (Egyptomania) of many westerners for products of ancient Egyptian origin. The challenge was how to manage the situation where the highly marketable product is also a staple food for the rural communities of the KS producing region where the prevailing poverty and undernutrition was aggravated by the three years of political strife following the 25 January 2011 revolution. The paper explains how a win win situation was reached whereby the AFTER project objective of benefiting the national and European food industry from new food processing technologies derived from African traditional foods is realized without depriving the poor KS producing communities from their lifeline. The weaknesses and gaps in the Egyptian laws and regulations and the absence of a national system for protection of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge are reviewed. The AFTER project results were instrumental in providing substantive support for initiation of measures to strengthen national intellectual property rights protection systems for the bearers of traditional knowledge and to guarantee their fair share of benefits and economic returns.

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African food tradition revisited by research

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