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## CAST PAPER EXAMINES THE ROLE OF PROBIOTICS IN HUMAN HEALTH

October 11, 2007...Ames, Iowa. Probiotics—live microorganisms that when administered in adequate amounts confer a health benefit on the host—have been studied for both human and animal applications, and research on this topic has accelerated in recent years. The Council for Agricultural Science and Technology (CAST) is releasing a new Issue Paper, *Probiotics: Their Potential to Impact Human Health*, as a contribution to the scientific literature on this important topic.

“To the uninitiated, the list of benefits from probiotics seems too diverse to be possible,” says Task Force Chair Dr. Mary Ellen Sanders, Dairy and Food Culture Technologies, Centennial, Colorado. “But once it is understood that probiotics can impact any colonized regions of the body and that colonizing bacteria have the potential to influence the body locally and systemically, the scope of benefits can be appreciated.”

This latest CAST publication describes the characteristics of probiotics, discusses what is known about the microbes that colonize humans, outlines the impacts of probiotics on human health and disease for specific conditions, and suggests future research and policy.

Specific features covered in the paper include

- Introduction
- Characteristics of Probiotics
- Human-Associated Microbial Ecosystems
- Probiotic Impact on Colonizing Microbiota
- Probiotic Impact on Human Health and Disease
- Safety Considerations
- Product Considerations
- Regulatory Status of Probiotic Foods
- Future Developments
- Recommendations
- Appendix, Glossary, and Complete Literature Cited

“This paper was written and reviewed by a task force of scientists from around the world,” says CAST Executive Vice President John M. Bonner. “CAST is pleased to present its newest Issue Paper as a timely overview of current developments and preview of future applications in the study of probiotics.”

The full text of the paper *Probiotics: Their Potential to Impact Human Health* (Issue Paper No. 36) may be accessed on the CAST website at [www.cast-science.org](http://www.cast-science.org), along with many of CAST’s other scientific publications, and is available in hardcopy for \$5.00 (includes shipping) by contacting the CAST office at 515-292-2125. CAST is an international consortium of 38 scientific and professional societies. It assembles, interprets, and communicates credible science-based information regionally, nationally, and internationally to legislators, regulators, policymakers, the media, the private sector, and the public.

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