



Protein quality of most soya products is good

Scientists at Unilever and WUR have discovered that on average processing has no negative effect on the nutritional value of soya, contrary to what is often thought.

Soya has to be processed, for example by soaking or heating it, before it can be used. 'People have doubts about the nutritional value of processed food, in particular the protein quality,' says Jurriaan Mes, researcher at Wageningen Food and Biobased Research. 'But it seems you don't need to worry about that with soya-based

Some products even score better after processing

products.'

The researchers looked at the literature on digestibility indispensable

amino acid scores (DIAAS). The higher the score, the better the product satisfies the body's requirements in terms of amino acid composition and digestibility. 'Anything above 75 is seen as a good score as this is the minimum required for health claims in certain countries,' says Mes.

High scores

Analysis showed soya product groups differ in their protein quality scores. Some products scored less than 75, mainly processed soya beans, soya protein meal and protein isolates. The average score for all products was 85, and the DIAAS was sometimes higher after processing than before.

'The study shows that processed soya as used in most vegetarian alternatives can make a significant contribution in meeting the body's protein requirements,' says Mes. He thinks a study of the final products could also be interesting in future. 'After all, you eat the entire product, not just the soya meal for instance.' TL