

## Hafiz Arbab Sakandar, Ph.D

Assistant Professor (Microbiology)

(Been around microbes all my life, now I study them for a living)

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### Profile

Dr. Hafiz Arbab Sakandar is working at Department of Microbiology and Immunology, NUMS, specializing in microbiome, food microbiology, and metabolome research. His work explores the interplay between diet, gut microbiota, and human health, with a focus on metabolic diseases, fermented foods, microbial ecology, and food-associated environments. Using integrated microbiome and metabolome approaches, he studies how microbial communities and their metabolic outputs influence human health, disease, food quality, and functionality. Previously, he worked at McGill University Canada and Jiangnan University, China as a research assistant. He has contributed to a mega-project developing the world's largest LAB germplasm (sampling from 40 countries). He believes in integrating medical, biological, ecological, and environmental data to improve human health and planetary sustainability. Outside academia, he enjoys hiking, cooking, and tinkering with AI tools and electronics. If you are interested in what he is currently up to follow him on [bluesky](#) and [X.com](#).

### Research Interest

Microbiome, Computational Microbiology, Health and Disease, Metabolome, Fermented Foods

### Selected Publications

- ✓ Remodeling of Gut Microbiome of Pakistani Expats in China after Ramadan Fasting. Hafiz Arbab Sakandar, Feiyan Zhao, Jiahe Kang, and Zhihong Sun. Food Science and Nutrition. 2025;13(3). e70019. DOI: 10.1002/fsn3.70019. (IF: 3.6)
- ✓ Curious Case of the History of Fermented Milk: Tangible Evidence. Hafiz Arbab Sakandar and Heping Zhang. Science Bulletin. 67, 17, 1625-1627. 2022. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scib.2022.07.013>. (IF: 21)
- ✓ Trends in Probiotic(s) fermented milks and their in vivo functionality: A review. Hafiz Arbab Sakandar and Heping Zhang. Trends in Food Science and Technology. 110: 55-65. 2021. (IF:16.56)
- ✓ Differential structures and enterotype-like clusters of Bifidobacterium responses to probiotic fermented milk consumption across subjects using a Bifidobacterium-target procedure. Xiaoye Bai, Lingling Shen, Xu Gao, Zhongjie Yu, Hafiz Arbab Sakandar, Lai-Yu Kwok, Zhihong Sun. Food Research International. 138. 2020. 10.1016/j.foodres.2020.109839 (IF:7.5)
- ✓ Targeting Gut Microbiota and Metabolism as the Major Probiotic Mechanism- an evidence-based Review. Teng Ma, Xin Shen, Xuan Shi, Hafiz Arbab Sakandar, Lai-Yu Kwok and Zhihong Sun. Trends in Food Science and Technology. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tifs.2023.06.013> (IF:16.56)

Full list of publications can be accessed [here](#).

## **Grants/Awards/Achievements**

- ✓ Exploitation of Genomic potential of lactic acid bacteria isolated from traditional fermented milk products of Africa and the Middle East. International Young Scientist Program. National Science Foundation of China (NFSC-32150410357) (0.4 million RMB)
- ✓ Study on the diversity of lactic acid bacteria in naturally fermented dairy products in the Middle East, Introduction project of high-end foreign experts in autonomous region, Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) (0.2 million RMB)
- ✓ Industrial Bioprocess Development, Quality Standardization and Import Substitution of High-Value Pakistani Propolis for Nutraceutical and Pharmaceutical Applications. ZemBiotech, Scotland. (0.5 Million PKR) 2026-2027.

### Fellowships

HEC IRSIP fellowship, ASM Future Leaders Mentorship Fellowship, EU Microbiome Ambassador Fellowship, Postdoc fellowships from Inner Mongolia Agricultural University and Shenzhen University.