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## OPINION ON THE FORMATION OF EXOPOLYSACCHARIDE CLUSTERS ON THE SURFACE OF WILD & COCO PRODUCTS

The formation of clusters of exopolysaccharides (EPS) produced by strains such as *Lactiplantibacillus plantarum*, *Lacticaseibacillus rhamnosus*, and *Lactobacillus delbrueckii* subsp. *bulgaricus* during fermentation, resulting in visible white clumps on the surface of yogurt, is not a defect. Instead, it is a natural and expected feature of foods with a high potency of probiotic cultures, such as those containing 100 billion CFU per 100 g.

This occurrence reflects the robust metabolic activity of the probiotic strains, which produce EPS as part of the fermentation process. The presence of these clusters is a hallmark of quality fermentation, highlighting the vitality and effectiveness of the cultures. It is an indicator of a healthy fermentation environment and supports the delivery of the intended probiotic and health benefits, while contributing to the unique texture and functionality of the product.

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