

## **Summary**

Fermentation is being used from several thousand years as an effective and low cost means to preserve the quality and safe foods. Fermentation of foods provides mechanisms where by fresh commodities can be acidified without seriously impairing the nutritional and physical properties. It generally produces acidic foods that are incapable of supporting the growth of pathogens. It creates products with unique and distinct flavour characteristics. It extends the processing season. Unlike other food processing operations, it requires very less energy. Fermented foods are classified in different ways, based on the substrate being fermented or the kind of microorganisms involved or based on the function of the food or fermentation process itself. The four main fermentation processes include acetic acid, alkali, alcoholic and lactic acid fermentation. There are several kinds of fermented dairy products which are very popular in the world market. Cheese, dahi, yoghurt, kefir, kumis, leben, villi, taette are some of the examples to fermented dairy products. There are several advantages of consuming fermented dairy products. They also provide health benefits provided if these are fermented with probiotic cultures, which once consumed establish in Gastro intestinal tract. Starter cultures play a key role during food fermentation. Sauerkraut is a vegetable based lactic fermented food prepared using cabbage. Cereal based fermented foods can be prepared using any one of the four methods, malting, Koji technology, use of hydrolytic activities originating from external enzyme sources like fungi, bacteria, plants or human saliva and dough (batter or gruel) fermentation. Soysauce, tempeh, miso are some of the examples to cereal based fermented foods. Vinegar is produced by fermenting alcohols by acetic acid bacteria.

Dhokla is produced by adding Bengal gram and black gram dhal flours and allowed to ferment by lactic by way of adding curd to the flour mix and steamed after overnight fermentation.