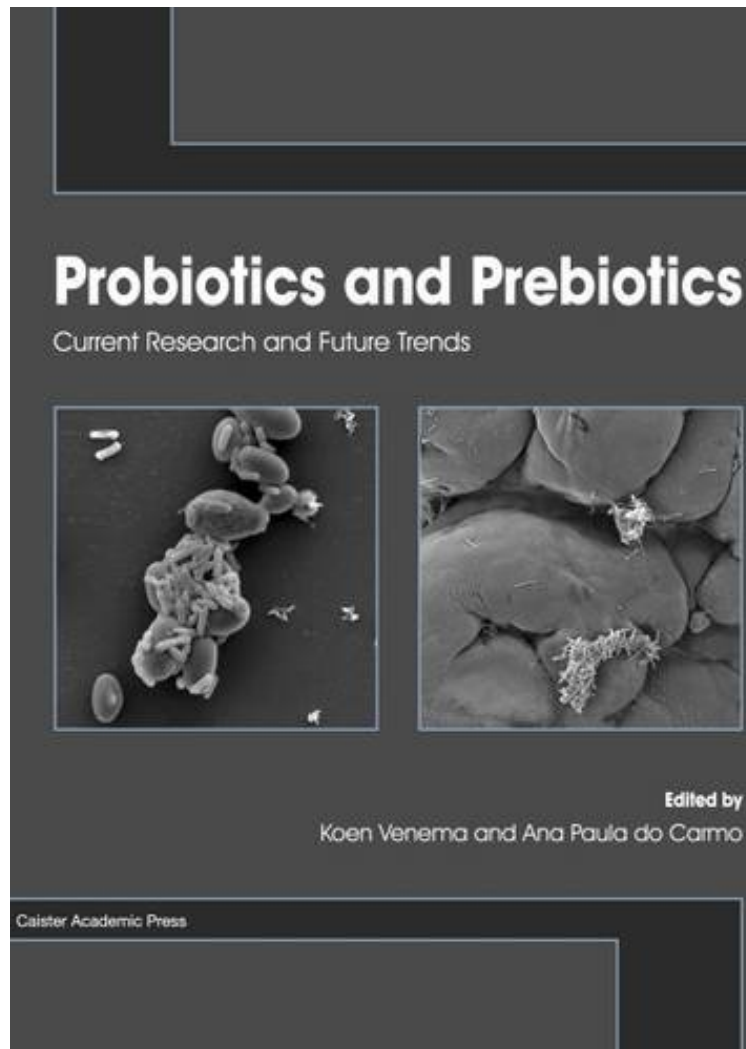


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From Venema Koen

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#3617659 in Books Venema Koen 2015-09-22Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 11.02 x 1.56 x 8.50l, .0
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62.Mb

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Composed of nearly a thousand different types of microorganisms - some beneficial, others not - the human gut microbiota plays an important role in health and disease. This is due to the presence of probiotic or beneficial microbes, or due to the feeding of prebiotics that stimulate the endogenous beneficial microbes (these promote health

by stimulating the immune system, improving the digestion and absorption of nutrients, and inhibiting the growth of pathogens). The notable health benefits of probiotic organisms have prompted much commercial interest, which in turn has led to a plethora of research initiatives in this area. These range from studies to elucidate the efficacy of the various health benefits to analyses of the diet-microbe interaction as a means of modulating the gut microbiota composition. Research in this area is at a very exciting stage. With state-of-the-art commentaries on all aspects of probiotics and prebiotics research, this book provides an authoritative and timely overview of the field. Written by leading international researchers, each chapter affords critical insight to a particular topic, reviews current research, discusses future direction, and stimulates discussion. Topics range from the different microorganisms used as probiotics (lactobacilli, bifidobacteria, yeast, etc.), and the techniques and approaches used (metagenomics, etc.), to the reviews of the clinical and medical aspects. The provision of extensive reference sections positively encourages readers to pursue each subject in greater detail. *** Librarians: ebook available on ProQuest and EBSCO [Subject: Microbiology, Life Science]