

MYCOTOXIN RESEARCH AND MYCOFLORA IN SOME DRIED EDIBLE MORELS MARKETED IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR, INDIA

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Abstract: *Morchella* species are major wild edible mushrooms of Jammu and Kashmir, which is both exported as well as largely consumed domestically. The aim of the present study was to characterize the toxigenic moulds and to screen different mycotoxins in dried morels. The most commonly isolated fungi were species of *Aspergillus*, *Fusarium* and *Penicillium* and the important mycotoxins detected were aflatoxins, citrinin, ochratoxin and zearalenol. The mean level of aflatoxin B₁ (125.44± 78.14) was found to be highest among all other mycotoxins. This is the first report on mycoflora and mycotoxin contamination in dried morels from Jammu and Kashmir.

Keywords: *Aspergillus*, *Morchella*, Mycotoxin, Mycoflora

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