

Studies on the incidence of Aflatoxin contamination in commercially available peanuts

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Peanut is one of the major oil seed which had been shown to be a good substrate for the growth of *Aspergillus* sp and for the production of aflatoxins. They are potent teratogenic, mutagenic, and carcinogenic mycotoxin proven to be contained in food & feed. Peanuts and peanut products are considered as popular food item among all age groups of population, especially in urban.

Present study was carried out as a preliminary survey, to evaluate the level of Aflatoxin contamination in commercially available peanut in the Colombo market. Twenty Samples were tested for aflatoxin by Association of Official Analytical Chemists, CB method. Degree of Aflatoxin contamination levels were quantified by densitometric evaluation.

Results of the present study showed that 6.6% of commercially available roasted peanut samples were contaminated and unsuitable for human consumption. Eighty six percent of samples had fallen into the category of uncontaminated with aflatoxin.

Effective constant monitoring, surveillance and control programs on aflatoxins are important for a country to protect consumers. By using this type of monitoring programs contaminated products and unfit products entering to the market could be evaluated and measures to uplift the knowledge of consumers and producing farmers/ traders are also could be introduced.

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