

Assessment of Aflatoxins in Marketed Fish: A Potential Forgotten Risk in Cameroon

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Abstract : Fresh and smoked fish are widely consumed in Cameroon. The traditional nature of smoking, the lack of hygiene in production, the poor preservation of stocks and the long storage time for certain types of fish considerably favor the contamination of products by molds, which secrete toxic molecules called mycotoxins. Today there are more than 400 types of mycotoxins, Aflatoxins being the most formidable. These toxins are considered carcinogenic in humans. It is in this perspective that we proposed to evaluate the total Aflatoxins in the fish marketed and consumed by the populations of the city of Yaoundé in Cameroon. On the one hand, it was a question of conducting a survey of fish consumers and sellers in points of sale, sampling fish of three species [Marquereau (*Scomber scombrus*), Cod (*Gadus morhua*) and Bifaka (*Ethmalosa fimbriata*)], randomly in some markets of the city to evaluate the total Aflatoxins contents (B1, B2, G1, G2) by the quantitative ELISA method and finally to estimate the level of exposure of the populations. It emerges from this study that of the 30 samples analyzed, 96.1% contained total Aflatoxins and two samples had total Aflatoxins levels above the standard, which is 20 ppb. These first results show that the risk is present in Cameroon and in order to improve the quality of marketed fish in terms of mycotoxins, a more thorough control must be done from the production chain to the consumer.

Keywords : aflatoxins, evaluation, exposure, mycotoxins, fish

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