



Recommendation (EU) 2022/553 on monitoring the presence of Alternaria toxins in foodstuffs

Background

Moulds of the genus *Alternaria* are ubiquitously distributed on plants. The Alternaria metabolite alternariol and its monomethyl ether are classified as being genotoxic (EFSA 2011). In some cases, chronic exposure of certain consumer groups to Alternaria toxins is considerably higher than the reference value of 2.5 µg/kg bw/day (EFSA 2016). With Regulation (EU) 2022/553 of April 2022, the EU Commission is therefore recommending that Alternaria toxins in food are monitored, while specifying guidance values for certain foodstuffs, including tomato products, paprika powder, sesame seeds, sunflower seeds and processed cereal-based foods for infants and young children.

Strategic evaluation

The Commission is calling on Member States and the industry to collect data on the foodstuffs mentioned above, as well as data on other foodstuffs, and prepares an annual report with the results. By asking national authorities to intensify the monitoring of foodstuffs for the presence of Alternaria toxins and to submit the data to EFSA on an annual basis, the Commission is expecting the data situation to improve and it is likely that guidance values will also be established for other foodstuffs. Alternaria toxins are also known to occur in fruits (e.g. apples, grapes), tea, green coffee beans, herbal tea ingredients (e.g. liquorice) and spices. In the medium term, limit values for foodstuffs are expected to be laid down in Regulation (EU) 2023/915.

Analysis

Our high-performance LC-MS/MS method permits the determination of alternariol, alternariol monomethyl ether, altenuene, tentoxin and tenuazonic acid in foodstuffs and medicinal herbs/extracts. The method has been validated for herbs, spices, extracts and other foodstuffs, and accredited in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025.

We would be delighted to advise you and draw up an offer for the determination of Alternaria toxins in your herbal raw materials or preparations.



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Literature

EUROPÄISCHE KOMMISSION. Verordnung (EU) 2022/553 der Kommission vom 5. April 2022, zur Überwachung des Vorkommens von Alternaria-Toxinen in Lebensmitteln

EFSA Scientific Opinion on the risks for animal and public health related to the presence of Alternaria toxins in feed and food. EFSA Journal 2011;9(10):2407. [97 pp.] doi:10.2903/j.efsa.2011.2407.

EFSA Dietary exposure assessment to Alternariatoxins in the European population. EFSA Journal 2016;14(12):4654, doi: 10.2903/j.efsa.2016.4654