

Toxigenic Potential of *Aspergillus Ochraceus* from Irrigated Brazilian Cerrado Coffee

**O. FREITAS-SILVA, A. M. BITTENCOURT, A. X. FARIAS, T. B. S. CORRÊA,
P. P. COSTA**

EMBRAPA – Food Technology, Av. das Américas, 29.501, Rio de Janeiro-RJ, Brazil,
CEP 23.020-470. E-mail: tania@ctaa.embrapa.br

SUMMARY

The objective of this work was to identify points of contamination of Brazilian Cerrado coffee regarding the ochratoxin A (OTA) production by *Aspergillus ochraceus* and to test two methods to detect OTA production on the culture medium. Ninety-three samples of coffee from Minas Gerais, Bahia and Goiás States, collected during several phases of the production chain, were analyzed. Forty coffee grains composed each sample. The fungi cultures developed were isolated and evaluated according their macro and microscopic characteristics. The identification was performed using the key characteristics. From the analyzed samples 91% presented fungi contamination, 39% of this total identified as *A. ochraceus*. Two methods to evaluate the toxigenic potential for the OTA production were compared. The first one was by the OTA extraction in Agar-coconut medium and the other one by the agar plus impregnation directly on TLC plates. From the screening of thirty strains of *Aspergillus ochraceus* isolated, eighteen were ochratoxin A (OTA) producers. No difference was observed between the two methods utilized: both were capable to detect OTA.