

Seed Mycoflora of *Lens esculenta* and Their Biocontrol by Chitosan

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Thirty-two fungal species belonging to 17 genera were recorded on 45 seed samples of lentil (*Lens esculenta*) collected from different governorates in Egypt. The prevalent genera were *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, *Cladosporium*, *Fusarium* and *Penicillium*. Chitosan enhanced suppression of seedborne mycoflora, as estimated using either agar plates or a blotter test of lentil seed samples. These results suggested an alternative non-toxic means for controlling seedborne fungi. Furthermore, pretreatment of lentil seeds with chitosan significantly reduced the natural contamination with mycotoxins – aflatoxins, ochratoxin A, citrinin and zearalenone – under storage conditions for 6 months.

KEY WORDS: *Lens esculenta*; Egypt; seedborne mycoflora; mycotoxins; chitosan.

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