

2026 Mycotoxin Compliance Guide: Safeguarding Botanical Ingredients

Guide covers aflatoxins, ochratoxin A, and fumonisins in botanicals, high-risk ingredients, and testing protocols.

IRVINE, CA, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Qalitek Laboratories, an ISO 17025-accredited third-party testing laboratory serving dietary supplement and food manufacturers across North America, today released expert guidance on mycotoxin contamination in botanical dietary supplements. The analysis explains the toxicology of aflatoxins, ochratoxin A, and fumonisins, identifies high-risk botanical ingredients, and outlines ISO 17025-accredited testing protocols that help brands avoid contamination-related recalls and regulatory enforcement actions.

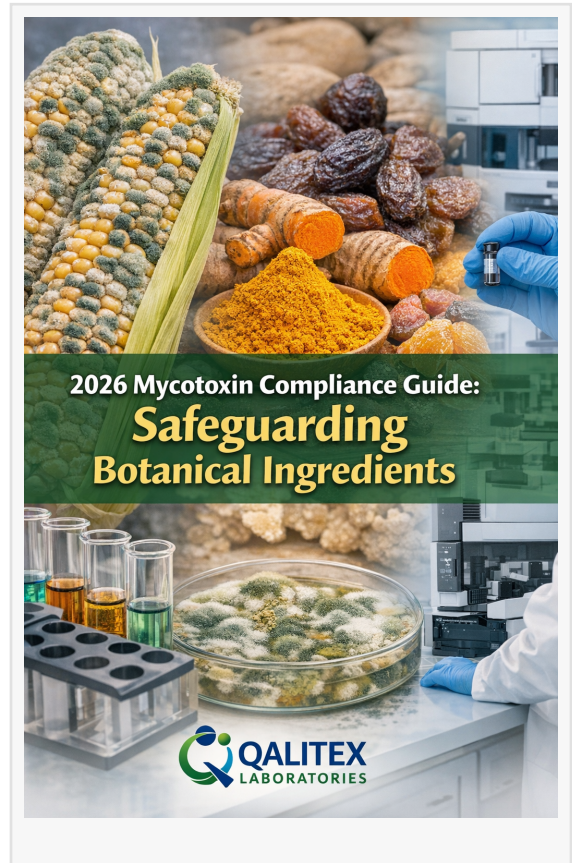
“Mycotoxin contamination in botanical ingredients is a serious and often underappreciated risk,” said Nour Abochama, Vice President of Operations at Qalitek Laboratories. “Aflatoxin B1, for example, is a potent carcinogen that can exceed FDA action levels even when no visual mold is present. Brands that implement rigorous mycotoxin testing can confidently assure their customers of product safety, while those relying solely on supplier assurances face potential compliance risks.”

Mycotoxin Overview

Mycotoxins are toxic compounds produced by mold species such as *Aspergillus*, *Fusarium*, and *Penicillium*. Unlike bacterial contamination, mycotoxins are chemically stable and cannot be eliminated by heat or standard processing. Contaminated ingredients retain mycotoxins through drying, grinding, and extraction.

Aflatoxin B1 – The most potent naturally occurring carcinogen, classified as an IARC Group 1 carcinogen. FDA action level: 20 ppb in food for human consumption.

Ochratoxin A – A nephrotoxin and probable human carcinogen (IARC Group 2B), commonly found in dried fruits, coffee, wine, and spices. EU limits: 10 µg/kg in dried fruits, 30 µg/kg in



spices (Regulation EC 1881/2006).

Fumonisin – Primarily produced by *Fusarium* species, contaminating corn and corn-derived ingredients. Fumonisin B1 and B2 are IARC Group 2B possible human carcinogens. FDA guidance: 2 ppm for corn products.

High-Risk Botanical Ingredients

Botanicals most susceptible to mycotoxin contamination include turmeric (aflatoxins), black pepper (aflatoxins and ochratoxin A), dried ginger (aflatoxins), ashwagandha (aflatoxins), milk thistle (aflatoxins), dried fruits like raisins, dates, and figs (aflatoxins and ochratoxin A), and corn-based ingredients (fumonisins and aflatoxins). Ingredients sourced from tropical or subtropical regions with high humidity are particularly vulnerable.

Testing Protocols and Compliance

LC-MS/MS (liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry) is the preferred method for mycotoxin testing, providing sensitive, specific, and multi-analyte detection below regulatory limits. Qalitek's panel includes aflatoxins B1, B2, G1, G2; ochratoxin A; fumonisins B1 and B2; deoxynivalenol; zearalenone; and T-2/HT-2 toxins.

“The brands we advise test every incoming lot of high-risk botanical ingredients,” added Abochama. “The cost of testing is minimal compared to potential recalls, FDA enforcement actions, or EU import detentions.”

About Qalitek Laboratories

Qalitek Laboratories, with facilities in Irvine and San Diego, California, is an ISO 17025-accredited third-party testing laboratory. The lab provides COA testing, heavy metal analysis by ICP-MS, microbiology testing per USP <61>/<62>, preservative efficacy testing, stability studies under ICH guidelines, and regulatory compliance support for dietary supplement, cosmetic, and consumer goods manufacturers. Turnaround times start at 48 hours for standard panels, supporting compliance with 21 CFR Part 111, California Proposition 65, Amazon supplement requirements, and Health Canada NHP standards.

Resources

Full article: <https://qalitek.com/blog/mycotoxin-testing-laboratory-aflatoxin-ochratoxin>

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