

Abstract

Maize is a major staple food in sub-Saharan Africa. Maize grains are susceptible to mycotoxin contamination during production and storage. Tropical weather, poor agricultural practices, poor storage conditions and little knowledge on mycotoxins exposes sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) community at high risk of mycotoxin. Studies in SSA demonstrated that, maize grains are infested by toxigenic fungi and contaminated with mycotoxins to varying degree. Mycotoxins frequent occurring in maize include; aflatoxins, deoxynivalenol, fumonisins, ochratoxins and zearalenone. Their effect can be acute and/or chronic leading to health problems such as; liver cancer, immunosuppression, irritation, and respiratory problem among others. Local practices, maize seems to be less contaminated are used for human consumption while those unfit for human are used as feeds exposing human health at high risk of mycotoxins toxicity. It is important for sub-Saharan Africa countries to invest in infrastructures and enforce practices which leads to prevention and control of mycotoxins in maize before they become real risks. Also, interventions on public awareness on the effect of mycotoxins to human health should be promoted to guarantee safe maize and maize products. In this review, mycotoxins occurrence, incidences, prevention, control, decontamination and inactivation in maize are scrutinized and