Importance of Total Ochratoxin Determination

Ochratoxins are known contaminants of human food and animal feed produced by certain ubiquitously occurring Aspergillus and Penicillium species. The toxins are frequently detected in cereal s, coffee, beer, wine, pet food, etc. Ochratoxins have been shown to be nephrotoxic, teratogenic and carcinogenic in laboratory animals.

Ochratoxin A (OTA) is the most prominent toxin, followed by ochratoxin B (OTB) and ochratoxin C (OTC). OTB has been reported to be less toxic than OTA, however, more recent data brings this into question. OTA and OTB can occur simultaneously, as they are produced by the same species of fungus and to date several studies have demonstrated synergistic effects of these toxins in vitro and in vivo. Based on these findings, it can be assumed that OTB may pose a risk to humans. Therefore, OTB is as least as important as OTA and to minimize risk it might be concluded that routine detection of OTB and OTA in food and beverages would be a prerequisite for improved detection of ochratoxin risk.

To protect consumers from mycotoxin related risks, the European Union (EU) has established regulatory limits for OTA, (10 ppb in dried vine fruits and instant coffee, 5 ppb in cereals and roasted coffee, 2 ppb in wine). No regulatory limits exist currently for OTB or OTC.

The Abraxis Total Ochratoxins ELISA allows the determination of 42 samples in duplicate determination. Only a few milliliters of sample are required. The test can be performed in 90 minutes.

Performance Data

Test sensitivity: The limit of detection for Ochratoxin A in buffer calculated as 90% B/Bo is equal to <0.03 ng/mL. The concentration of residue necessary to cause 50% inhibition (50% B/B0) is approximately 0.12 ng/mL. Determinations closer to the middle of the calibration range of the test yield the most accurate results. The following is the sensitivity in different matrices: 2.5 ppb in green/roasted coffee; 1.25 ppb in grains; 0.5 ppb in beer; 1.75 ppb in wine; 5.0 ppb in dried pet food.

Test reproducibility: Coefficients of variation (CVs) for standards: <10%; CVs for samples: <15%.

Selectivity: This ELISA recognizes Ochratoxin A and related compounds with varying degrees:

Cross-reactivities:
- Ochratoxin A: 100%
- Ochratoxin B: 231%
- Ochratoxin C: 119%
- Fumonisin-B1: <0.2%
- Fumonisin-B2: <0.2%
- Deoxynivalenol: <0.2%
- Zearalenone: <0.2%

Samples: To eliminate matrix effects in samples, a sample extraction/clean-up and dilution is required. See Preparation of Samples section. For additional extraction procedures for various other matrices please contact Abraxis LLC.

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B. Additional Materials (not included with the test kit)
1. Micro-pipettes with disposable plastic tips (10-200 and 200-1000 µL)
2. Multi-channel pipette (50-250 µL) or stepper pipette with plastic tips (10-250 µL)
3. Disposable pipettes, 2.0, 5.0, 10 mL
4. Microtiter plate reader (wave length 450 nm)
5. Timer
6. Tape or Parafilm
7. 15 mL and 2.0 mL plastic centrifuge tube or equivalent
8. Distilled or deionized water
9. Methanol
10. Sodium Bicarbonate, ACS grade
11. Vortex mixer and overhead mixer
12. Centrifuge capable of 3,000 x g (13,000 rpm optional)
13. Analytical balance, 2 decimal place

C. Test Preparation
Micro-pipetting equipment and pipette tips for pipetting the standards and the samples are necessary. We recommend using a multi-channel pipette or a stepping pipette for adding the assay buffer, conjugate, substrate and stop solutions in order to equalize the incubation periods of the solutions on the entire microtiter plate. Please use only the reagents and standards from one package lot in one test, as they have been adjusted in combination.

1. Adjust the microtiter plate and the reagents to room temperature before use.
2. Remove the number of microliter plate strips required from the foil bag. The remaining strips should be stored in the foil bag and zip-locked closed. Store the remaining kit in the refrigerator (4-8°C).
3. The standards, conjugate assay buffer, conjugate, substrate, Dilution Buffer I and II, and stop solutions are ready to use and do not require any further dilutions.
4. Prepare 5.0% sodium bicarbonate stock solution: 5.0 gm of NaHCO3 in 100 mL dH2O. Use the 5% stock solution to dilute to 0.1% with a 1:1 solution of Methanol(MeOH)/DI water.
5. Dilute the wash buffer (5X) concentrate at a ratio of 1:5. If using the entire bottle (100 mL), add to 400 mL of deionized or distilled water.
6. The stop solution should be handled with care as it contains diluted H2SO4.

D. Preparation of Samples
Samples should be analyzed immediately after preparation to prevent adsorption/degradation of the analyte. Please inquiry about preparation of samples for other matrices such as baby food, baby cereals, etc.

Roasted/Green Coffee
1. Weigh 0.5 gm of ground/homogenized coffee into a 15 mL plastic centrifuge tube.
2. Add 10.0 mL of a 1:1 MeOH/DI-0.1% bicarbonate sol., vortex thoroughly. Mix using an overhead rotator for 10 minutes.
3. Centrifuge for 5 min at 3,000 X g. Save supernatant.
4. Dilute supernatant 1.5 (i.e. 200 µL of supernatant, 700 µL dH2O, and 100 µL of Dilution Buffer I). Vortex to mix and analyze as sample (Assay Procedure, step 1). The Ochratoxins concentration contained in samples is then determined by multiplying the ELISA result by the dilution factor of 200. Recoveries were 97-119%.

Grains
1. Weigh 0.5 gm of homogenized grains into a 15 mL plastic centrifuge tube.
2. Add 5.0 mL of a 1:1 MeOH/DI-0.1% bicarbonate sol., vortex thoroughly. Mix using an overhead rotator for 10 minutes.
3. Centrifuge for 5 min at 3,000 X g. Save supernatant.
4. Dilute supernatant 1.5 (i.e. 200 µL of supernatant, 700 µL dH2O, and 100 µL of Dilution Buffer I). Vortex to mix and analyze as sample (Assay Procedure, step 1). The Ochratoxins concentration contained in grains is then determined by multiplying the ELISA result by the dilution factor of 50. Recoveries were 95-114%.

Beer
1. Measure and add 1.0 mL of beer into a 15 mL plastic centrifuge tube.
2. Add 4.0 mL of a 1:1 MeOH/DI-0.1% bicarbonate, vortex thoroughly. Mix using an overhead rotator for 10 minutes.
3. Centrifuge for 5 min at 3,000 X g. Save supernatant.
4. Dilute supernatant 1.4 (i.e. 250 µL of supernatant, 650 µL dH2O, and 100 µL of Dilution Buffer I). Vortex to mix and analyze as sample (Assay Procedure, step 1). The Ochratoxins concentration contained in samples is then determined by multiplying the ELISA result by the dilution factor of 20. Recoveries were 100-103%.

Wine
1. Measure and add 1.0 mL of wine into a 15 mL plastic centrifuge tube.
2. Add 9.0 mL of 80% methanol-20% DI water-0.1% sodium bicarbonate, vortex thoroughly. Mix using an overhead rotator for 10 minutes.
3. Centrifuge for 5 min at 3,000 X g. Save supernatant.
4. Dilute supernatant 1.7 (i.e. 140 µL of supernatant, 760 µL dH2O, and 100 µL of Dilution Buffer I). Vortex to mix and analyze as sample (Assay Procedure, step 1). The Ochratoxins concentration contained in samples is then determined by multiplying the ELISA result by the dilution factor of 70. Recoveries were 97-109%.

Pet Food
1. Weigh 0.5 gm of homogenized dried pet food into a 50 mL plastic centrifuge tube.
2. Add 20 mL of a 1:1 MeOH/DI-0.1% bicarbonate, vortex thoroughly. Mix using an overhead rotator for 10 minutes.
3. Centrifuge for 5 minutes at 3,000 X g. Save supernatant.

4. Dilute supernatant 1:5 (i.e. 200 µL of supernatant, 700 µL dH2O, and 100 µL of Dilution Buffer I. Vortex to mix and analyze as sample (Assay Procedure, step 1). The Ochratoxins concentration contained in samples is then determined by multiplying the ELISA result by the dilution factor of 200. Recoveries were 97-119%.

E. Working Scheme
The microtiter plate consists of 12 strips of 8 wells, which can be used individually for the test. The standards must be run with each test. Never use the values of standards which have been determined in a test performed previously.

F. Assay Procedure
1. Add 100 µL of the standard solutions and samples or sample extracts into the wells of the test strips according to the working scheme given. We recommend using duplicates or triplicates.
2. Cover the wells with paraffin or tape and mix the contents by moving the strip holder in a circular motion on the benchtop for 30 seconds. Be careful not to spill contents. Incubate the strips for 30 minutes at room temperature.
3. After incubation, remove the covering and vigorously shake the contents of these wells into a sink. Wash the strips four times using the 1X washing buffer solution. Use 250 µL of washing buffer for each well and each washing step. Remaining buffer in the wells should be removed by patting the plate dry on a stack of paper towels.
4. Add 50 µL of HRP conjugate assay buffer solution to the individual wells successively using a multi-channel pipette or a stepping pipette.
5. Add 50 µL of HRP conjugate solution to the individual wells successively using a multi-channel pipette or a stepping pipette.
6. Cover the wells with paraffin or tape and mix the contents by moving the strip holder in a circular motion on the benchtop for 30 seconds. Be careful not to spill contents. Incubate the strips for 30 minutes at room temperature.
7. After incubation, remove the covering and vigorously shake the contents of these wells into a sink. Wash the strips three times using the 1X washing buffer solution. Use 250 µL of washing buffer for each well and each washing step. Remaining buffer in the wells should be removed by patting the plate dry on a stack of paper towels.
8. Add 150 µL of substrate (color) solution to the wells. Cover the wells with paraffin or tape and mix the contents by moving the strip holder in a circular motion on the benchtop for 30 seconds. Incubate the strips for 20 minutes at room temperature. Protect the strips from direct sunlight.
9. Add 100 µL of stop solution to the wells in the same sequence as for the substrate solution.
10. Read the absorbance at 450 nm using a microplate ELISA photometer within 15 minutes after the addition of the stopping solution.

G. Evaluation
The evaluation of the ELISA can be performed using commercial ELISA evaluation programs [4-Parameter (preferred) or Logit/Log]. For manual evaluation, calculate the mean absorbance value for each of the standards. Calculate the %B/B0 for each standard by dividing the mean absorbance value for each standard by the Zero Standard (Standard 0) mean absorbance. Construct a standard curve by plotting the %B/B0 for each standard on the vertical linear (x) axis versus the corresponding Ochratoxin concentration on the horizontal logarithmic (x) axis on graph paper. %B/B0 for samples will then yield levels in ppb of Ochratoxin by interpolation using the standard curve. Samples showing lower concentrations of Ochratoxin compared to Standard 1 (0.025 ng/mL) should be reported as containing < 0.025 ng/mL. Samples showing a higher concentration than Standard 5 (0.40 ng/mL) must be diluted further with Dilution Buffer II provided to obtain accurate results.

H. References