

Review Form 3

Journal Name:	International Journal of Plant & Soil Science
Manuscript Number:	Ms_IJPSS_122358
Title of the Manuscript:	Investigating the ochratoxin production potential of Aspergillus spp in Indian Rice: A Comprehensive Study
Type of the Article	

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PART 1: Review Comments

Compulsory REVISION comments	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. Why do you like (or dislike) this manuscript? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</p>	<p>This manuscript is important as it addresses ochratoxin contamination in rice, a major food staple, which has significant implications for food safety and public health. The study's findings provide valuable insights into the ochratoxin production potential of <i>Aspergillus</i> spp. in an Indian context. I appreciate the thorough approach, though some areas, such as methodological details and broader implications, could be expanded.</p>	
<p>Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)</p>	<p>It seems appropriate as it clearly conveys the main objective of the study.</p>	
<p>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.</p>	<p>The abstract should include specific numerical data, such as the concentration ranges of ochratoxin detected, the prevalence rate of <i>Aspergillus</i> spp., or the percentage of rice samples that tested positive. This will make the abstract more informative and allow readers to grasp the study's significance quickly.</p> <p>The objective of the study should be more explicitly stated. For example, "This study aimed to evaluate the ochratoxin production potential of <i>Aspergillus</i> spp. in Indian rice samples using [specific method]."</p>	
<p>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</p>	<p>Introduction:</p> <p>Clearly identify the gap in existing research that the study addresses, such as the lack of exploration of ochratoxin production in Indian rice. Highlight the significance of rice as a staple food in India and the economic impact of ochratoxin contamination, including specific regions if applicable. Reference recent studies (within the last 5 years) to demonstrate that the research builds on the latest advancements, particularly in ochratoxin detection methods.</p> <p>Materials and Methods:</p> <p>Specify the number of rice samples, their geographic origins, and the collection period to ensure sample representativeness. Provide detailed descriptions of the methods used for detecting <i>Aspergillus</i> spp. and ochratoxin A, including culture conditions, media, and detection techniques. Include information on positive and negative controls, and the standards used for ochratoxin quantification to ensure reproducibility. Ensure consistency in units of measurement (e.g., µg/kg) and cite standard protocols or widely accepted methods used in the study.</p> <p>Results:</p> <p>Offer a detailed interpretation of the data, highlighting significant variations in ochratoxin levels between regions with possible explanations. Include statistical significance (e.g., p-values) for the results to indicate the reliability of observed differences. Ensure figures and tables are clear and well-labeled, and the text closely corresponds with the data presented. Align the text with specific figures/tables, referencing them appropriately when discussing the results.</p> <p>Discussion:</p>	

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	<p>Compare findings with those from other regions or studies, explaining why ochratoxin levels in Indian rice might differ. Discuss biological mechanisms of ochratoxin production by <i>Aspergillus</i> spp. in rice and the public health implications of these findings. Avoid unsupported speculation, and ensure that any hypotheses, such as the influence of climate on ochratoxin production, are clearly stated or supported by references.</p>	
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the scientific correctness of this manuscript. Why do you think that this manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.</p>	<p>The manuscript is scientifically robust due to its use of established detection methods for ochratoxin A and <i>Aspergillus</i> species. The study's comprehensive sampling and proper controls ensure reliable results. Statistical analysis and adherence to standard protocols further support its technical soundness.</p>	
<p>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.</p>	<p>Update the reference list with more recent studies, particularly in rapidly evolving areas like food safety and mycotoxin research.</p>	
<p><u>Minor REVISION</u> comments</p> <p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<p>The language and English quality of the article are generally suitable for scholarly communications. However, improvements are needed in clarity and precision. Addressing grammatical errors and ensuring consistent terminology will enhance readability and professionalism.</p>	
<p><u>Optional/General</u> comments</p>		

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment <i>(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
<p>Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?</p>	<p><i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i></p>	

Reviewer Details:

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