

Edible Mushroom: Boon to human health and nutrition

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Edible mushrooms have long been known to be easily cultivable, affordable, protein rich food and has been referred to as poor man's meat. The most common mushrooms cultivated for edible purposes are *Agaricus bisporus*, different species of *Pleurotus*, *Lentinus* sp., *Volvariella* sp., *Calocybe indica* and some more. It is now known that besides being high in proteins, they are also good source of other nutrients and dietary fibres. They also have several medicinal and therapeutic properties such as high antioxidants, antimicrobials, anti-inflammatory, antitumor, anticancer and many others. Thus, it is indeed nature's boon to human kind where so many beneficial traits are found to occur in a single group of organism. Besides, the compost remaining after mushroom cultivation is a good biofertilizer since it still contains a number of partially biodegraded nutrients which can be used for crop improvement.

Key words: *Agaricus bisporus*, *Calocybe indica*, *Pleurotus* sp., *Volvariella* sp., *Lentinus* sp., antioxidant, anticancer
