

Food Value of Fungi ⇒ Even through the systematic study of Fungi is scarcely 150 years old yet, this group of organism has been known to man for 1000^{of} years. They are indirectly used in preparation of many food industries like Bakeries, Bread, Cheese Wine etc. Some fungi like Agaricus, Truffles are edible and extensively cultivated. Although the food value of fungi is very less but they are mentioned below, classwise:—

In phycomycetes ⇒ As a whole are not so much important to man. Its food value is almost nil. However a few members are utilized in industries for fermentation so they are indirectly used as food.

Ascomycetes ⇒ It is of tremendous importance to man. Certain species of yeast are known for their fermenting activities, which are utilized in preparation of Bakeries and in spoiling the food stuff.

Some of the members such as morels and Truffles are fleshy and edible. They are highly priced by consumers for their delicacy and flavour.

Basidiomycetes ⇒ No edible form so there is no food value of the members of this class.

Auto basidiomycetes ⇒ [Fleshy fungi]— It is of considerable importance. They are commonly called as MUSHROOMS, which are fairly rich in proteins. Agaricus campestris serves as a source of food in America, India and France. In Japan

These Mushrooms are being cultivated on large scale.

About Twelve hundred of fleshy fungi are reported to be edible. All puff balls as a rule are edible, particularly when they are young. Some common edible fungi are Agaricus Compestri's, Morchella spp., Lepiota spp., Tricholoma spp. and Tleurofufus species.

Cultivated Mushrooms are grown in reduced light, Numerous other species are collected and cultivated in field and forest. However edible fungi are not so proteinous but they are mainly priced for their flavour.

Fungi imperfecti (Deuteromycetes) \Rightarrow Certain species of Cryptococcus being very rich in protein and vitamins are used as food particularly by Germans. Edible and poisonous fungi are very similar. So it is very wise to eat only a relatively small quantity of Mushroom for the first time.

Thus it is seen that Fungi has not so significant role as food value to Men.

Mushrooms \Rightarrow Mushrooms are included in order Agaricales of class Autobasidiomycetes. ~~There~~ Their fruiting body is like an Umbrella which go frequently on rotten woods or Manurete soil. Mushroom includes both edible and poisonous species. So they are directly used as food ~~for~~ or

as medicines prepared by them.

The mushrooms are rich in protein and vitamins, but they are eaten particularly for their flavour. Mushroom cultivation is an expanding industry in several countries including India.

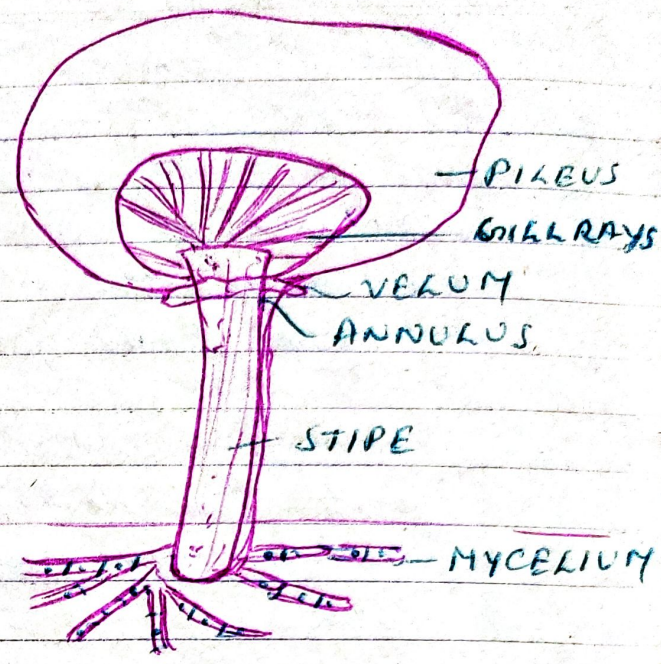
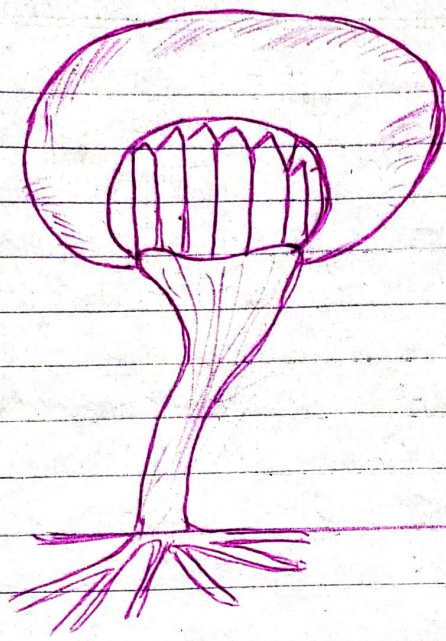
Agaricus Compestris is most commonly cultivated mushrooms. Mushrooms have been used by man as food since ancient times. There are about 60 species of mushrooms which are edible.

Agaricus bisporus is the one which is widely cultivated in coastal areas, and they are often seen in menu of the higher restaurants. There are also species of mushrooms through which Soup, Soups, and other food products are prepared.

The genus Morechella is rather well known as an edible fungus, under the name of Morel or sponge mushrooms. They are higher priced for their delicacy.

Commonly known as puff balls, are also edible, when young.

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[AGARICUS COMPESTRIS]



PUFF BALL
[LYCOPERDENA]

Figures of some edible fungi