



World Society for Mushroom Biology and Mushroom Products
Symposium: Prospects of Mushroom Cultivation in Latin America for the XXI Century

CULTIVATION OF EDIBLE AND MEDICINAL MUSHROOMS IN GUATEMALA, CENTRAL AMERICA

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Presented in Cuernavaca, Mexico, February 22, 2002

ABSTRACT

Edible wild mushrooms have been consumed in Guatemala since pre-Columbian times. However, mushroom cultivation started until the end of the 1950's with *Agaricus bisporus*. This was established on a commercial scale during the 1970's. The cultivation of *Lentinula edodes* began in 1979 using *Quercus* logs as substrate; the use of oak sawdust started in 1991. Guatemala currently produces about 68,504 kg of *A. bisporus* and *A. bitorquis*; 34,020 kg of *L. edodes*; and 29,580 kg of *Pleurotus* per year. Other mushrooms, such as *Flammulina velutipes*, *Ganoderma lucidum*, *Agrocybe aegerita*, *Volvariella volvacea*, and *Pholiota nameko* have also been produced experimentally since 1995.

Key words: Edible mushrooms, cultivation, history, Guatemala.