

## **Presence of ochratoxigenic fungi on grape leaves in four vineyards in Zadar County**

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In the last two decades, the production of quality and top quality wines in Zadar County is constantly increasing and they have become very recognizable and sought after on the market. One of the possible threats to this production is the contamination of red wines with ochratoxin A (OTA). This nephrotoxic mycotoxin is synthesized during the growth of some fungal species from *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* genera and can be found as a pollutant in red wines of the southern regions of Europe. Under climatic conditions and its geographic area, Zadar County should not fall into the area of OTA high-contamination risk, but global warming could change this situation and endanger the safety of red wines in Zadar County. As part of the project Evaluation of the risk of contamination of red wines of Zadar County with OTA, funded by the Agricultural Research Council (VIP), investigations were carried out on the presence of ochratoxigenic fungi in 4 vineyards in Zadar County. In August and September of 2018, samples of grape leaves were sampled, mycoflora was isolated and morphologically determined. Potential producers of OTA were inoculated on a liquid nutrient medium that supports the synthesis of OTA and screened for the production of this toxin. The results indicate that the possibility of the contamination of grapes and wine with OTA is low in the vineyards of Zadar County.

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