Lesson 1

Which mushrooms safe to eat?

Students, teachers and parents may have questions regarding which mushrooms are safe to eat, or what type of mushrooms growing in the mushroom kit supplied.

These resources and the FAQ section below will help explain why store bought mushrooms are safe, the mushrooms growing in the kit are safe, and illustrates the dangers of foraging.

<u>IMPORTANT!</u> Do not pick wild mushrooms, or touch mushrooms growing in the wild. Some wild grown mushrooms can look similar to the store-bought variety but can be deathly poisonous. It can be very difficult to distinguish the difference between what is poisonous and what is safe.

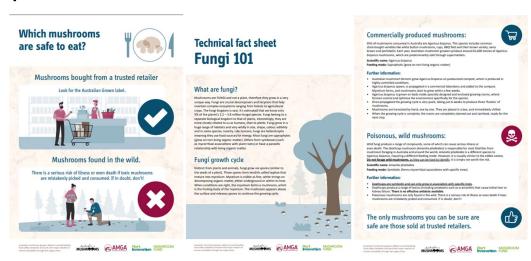
The only safe mushroom is a commercially grown store-bought mushroom, or the mushrooms growing in your kit.

Step 1. Watch this video.



Click this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-7y0sBIXKM

Step 2. Refer to the fact sheet



CLICK TO DOWNLOAD: https://australianmushroomgrowers.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/092123-AMGA-Factsheet-FINAL.pdf

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FAQ's

Q: If I use an app to identify the mushrooms I pick from the wild, will they be safe to eat?

There is a myriad of mushroom identification apps available, however it can be difficult to use only a photo as a method of identification. Apps can be used to help conversation about mushroom identification, but we strongly advise against using an app to identify if a mushroom is edible. It's not worth the risk.

Q: How do I know that other types of mushrooms won't grow in the school mushroom kit?

The kits provided have been assembled on a commercial mushroom compost facility, which supplies substrate to large scale commercial mushroom farms. The compost process includes a pasteurisation process with heat up to 70 degrees. This process eliminates human pathogens and competing fungi, providing a nutrient dense organic material ready to be spawn run.

Spawn is the vegetative form of the mushroom, known as the mycelium, which has been grown on sterilised grain. *Agaricus bisporus* spawn is sourced from a specialised commercial laboratory (of which there are only two in Australia). This highly controlled process relies on impeccable hygiene and it's tested to confirm it is free from microbial contaminants.

Q: Could 'death cap' mushrooms grow on a mushroom farm?

Absolutely not.

It is biologically impossible for *Amanita phalloides* (commonly known as 'death cap' mushrooms) to grow on a commercial *Agaricus bisporus* (commonly known as white and brown mushrooms) farm.

Why? Because they are completely different species.

Amanita phalloides are symbiotic mushrooms, meaning they will only grow near a tree, as it gives and receives nutrients from that tree.

Agaricus bisporus are saprophytic mushrooms, meaning they grow by using organic matter as a food source.

Amanita phalloides will not grow on compost produces specifically for A. bisporus, as it needs a different environment.

It's a bit like putting a polar bear in a eucalyptus tree and expecting it to survive!

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Q: How do you pronounce the species name?

Agaricus bisporus: "Ah-gary-kus Bye-spore-us"

Amanita phalloides: "Am-in-knighta fell-oi-dees"

Q: What's in the compost?

In Australia, the growth medium used for growing *Agaricus* is a compost made primarily from wheat straw and poultry litter. The formulation and process used for compost production is backed by decades of research and practical experience.

The compost process includes a pasteurisation process with heat up to 70 degrees for a long period of time. This process eliminates human pathogens and competing fungi, providing a nutrient dense organic material that is safe to grow mushrooms.

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