

## Potential of new oyster mushroom strain for Sri Lanka

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*Pleurotus ostreatus* is the most preferred cultivated mushroom species in Sri Lanka. The cultivated strains in Sri Lanka still record low yields irrespective of the considerable research work done so far. Therefore, new mushroom varieties and strains that can perform well in the country are required. The aim of this study was to evaluate the adaptability of new *Pleurotus ostreatus* strain from china for cultivating under local growing conditions. The experiment was carried out at Agriculture Research Station, Telijjawila from August 2017 to May 2018 according to the recommended cultivation practices. Spawns of commonly grown strain and new strain (Fujian Agriculture and Forestry University, China) were prepared and introduced separately in to polypropylene bags filled with sterilized compost media. The experiment was laid in Completely Randomized Design inside the mushroom shed and the above 2 treatments were replicated 25 times. The spawn run rate, morphological characters, biological efficiency, and the Asymmetry index was compared. Results revealed that the biological efficiency (92%), spawn run rate and the average yield of 3 flushes 300 g is significantly higher in the new mushroom strain at  $P > 0.05$ . Time taken for primordial initiation of Chinese strain was observed to be higher when ambient temperature was high. As the new strain has more consumer preferred characters like morphological attractiveness (asymmetry index closer to 1), deliciousness and good texture, it is found to be a potential oyster mushroom strain which could be introduced to Sri Lanka to strengthen cultivated mushroom sector.

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