Method Validation of Aflatoxin M$_1$ in Iranian White Cheese by High Performance Liquid Chromatography and Immunoaffinity Columns

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Aflatoxin M$_1$ is a result fungal secondary metabolite in ruminants. This toxin remains in milk as one of the most important contaminants. In this work, we modified the methods described by other researchers and presented it as a validated method for monitoring aflatoxin M$_1$ in Iranian white cheese for the first time. At first, the toxin was extracted from a polar solution (dichloromethane) and then the extract was dried and dissolved in hexane, methanol and water solution. In the third step, the water phase was separated and purified using immunoaffinity liquid chromatography. For method validation, we calculated accuracy, precision, and sensitivity factors. Measurement of accuracy of the method was performed by fortification of conventional blank samples. For precision measurement, the method was evaluated in six working days under repeatability condition and calculated the mean, variance, and relative standard deviation (RSD). Limit of detection in our method was 55 ppt, and limit of quantification was 183 ppt.

**Keywords:** Aflatoxin M$_1$, Cheese, Validation, High performance liquid chromatography (HPLC)

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