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COLLECTION, MARKETING AND CULTIVATION OF EDIBLE FUNGI IN SPAIN

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ABSTRACT

We report a total of 61 species of wild edible fungi collected and eaten in Spain. It may no longer be considered a mycophobic country. A tradition of wild edible fungi has existed in Cataluña and País Vasco for many years, but now includes significant consumption and marketing of *Boletus* spp., *Cantharellus cibarius* and *Lactarius deliciosus*, and others, from Aragón, Castilla-León, Madrid, Andalucía and Valencia. The most successful attempts cultivating edible ectomycorrhizal fungi, have been made with *Tuber melanosporum* Vitt., the black truffle. Its cultivation involves the inoculation in the nursery of seedlings of *Quercus ilex* L., *Q. faginea* Lam., *Q. humilis* Miller and *Corylus avellana* L. Truffles appear 8-10 years after the seedlings are planted in fields, and are harvested with the aid of trained dogs. The average annual production of black truffle in Spain is 22,400 kg, and prices range from 100 €/kg to 360 €/kg paid to the collector. The success with *T. melanosporum* encouraged mycologists to try to grow other edible ectomycorrhizal fungi to guarantee a stable production able to meet the increasing demand of these products.

Key words: Edible fungi, non-timber forest products, collection, marketing, cultivation, black truffle, *Tuber melanosporum*, Spain.
