

**HEAVY METALS CONTAMINATION IN LEAFY VEGETABLES
AND THEIR HEALTH RISK**

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ABSTRACT

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Leafy vegetables are essential in human diet but unfortunately they will form a group of food which may contribute maximally to heavy metal consumption. Heavy metals in leafy vegetables at rural, urban and agricultural areas are related with direct and indirect adverse health effects. This study determined the concentration of selected heavy metals (Fe, Zn, Mn and Cu) content in leafy vegetables such as Spinach (*Amaranthus Gangeticus*) and Water Spinach (*Ipomoea Aquatica*) that grown at urban and agricultural areas in Kelantan and compared with those grown in clean (rural) area. The aim of this study also was to estimate the potential risk index of heavy metals to human health. The concentrations of heavy metals were analyzed using the methods of Quant-express (Fast screening) by X-Ray Fluorescence (XRF S8 Tiger) Spectrometer. The leafy vegetables samples were high in copper rather than other studied metals. The average concentrations of heavy metals in tested vegetables those grown at agricultural area were higher than urban area for most heavy metals due to excess fertilizer applied to the soil and the use of pesticides to prevent insect's attack. Most of heavy metals except copper were deficiency to moderately enriched ($2 \leq EF < 5$) since the EF values of the metals were more than 2. Most vegetables samples have showed no hazard levels since the HQ values were less than 0.1. All tested leafy vegetables samples were safe to be consumed and did not pose any risk to human health since the HI values for all vegetables were lower than 1.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	vi
LIST OF FIGURES	vii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	viii
ABSTRACT	X
ABSTRAK	xi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background Study	1
1.2 Problem Statements	3
1.3 Significance of the Study	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 Leafy Vegetables	6
2.2 Heavy Metals	8
2.3 Effects of Heavy Metals On Human Health	9
2.3.1 Zinc	11
2.3.2 Iron	12
2.3.3 Manganese	12
2.3.4 Copper	13
2.4 Effects of surrounding environments on metals levels in leafy vegetables	14
2.4.1 Industrial activities	14
2.4.2 Agricultural activities	15
2.4.3 Urbanization developments	16
2.4.4 Atmospheric pollution	17
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Materials	19
3.1.1 Raw Materials	19
3.1.2 Chemicals and reagent	19
3.1.3 Equipments and instruments	19
3.2 Methods	20
3.2.1 Sampling Sites	20
3.2.2 Types of samples	21
3.2.3 Sample pre-treatment	22
3.2.4 Sample Preparation	22
3.2.5 Sample analysis	23

3.2.6	Statistical Analysis	24
3.3	Health Risk Assessment	24
3.3.1	Enrichment Factor	25
3.3.2	Average Daily Intake Dose (ADD)	26
3.3.3	Hazard Quotient (HQ)	26
3.3.4	Hazard Index (HI)	27
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS		
4.1	Heavy Metals Concentration In Leafy Vegetables	29
4.1.1	Iron	30
4.1.2	Zinc	32
4.1.3	Manganese	33
4.1.4	Copper	34
4.2	Enrichment factor	35
4.3	Average Daily Intake Dose (ADD)	37
4.4	Hazard Quotient (HQ) and Hazard Index (HI)	38
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		40
CITED REFERENCES		42
APPENDICES		46
CURRICULUM VITAE		51

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Caption	Page
3.1	Classification of the sampling areas	20
3.2	Description of vegetables analyzed	22
3.3	Contamination categories of enrichment factor	26
3.4	Guidelines for interpret HQ calculations	27
4.1	Heavy metals concentrations in leafy vegetables	29
4.2	Enrichment factors for all heavy metals in leafy vegetables	36
4.3	Average Daily Intake Dose (ADD)	37
4.4	Hazard Quotient (HQ)	38
4.5	Hazard Index (HI)	38