MATERIALS AND METHODS
Seeds of commonly grown vegetables vis. lady's finger (*Abelmoschus esculentus*, (L.) Moench); tomato (*Lycopersicon lycopersicum* (L.) Kars.); chillies (*Capsicum annuum* L.); brinjal (*Solanum melongena* L.); and Kenaf (*Hibiscus cannabinus* L.) were collected locally from the market and farmers and also from Paloncha, Khammam District, Andhra Pradesh. In all about 400 seeds of each plant species were observed for seed mycoflora. Seeds were exposed to continuous light, continuous dark and alternate day light conditions. Since the surface sterilization would give an idea of internally seed-borne mycoflora, if any, two sets of seeds, one surface sterilized with *HgCl₂*, and another set of unsterilized seeds were tested separately.

Since 1958 international comparative seed health testing schemes have regularly been organized and 16 international workshops on seed pathology have been held for joint laboratory studies of the seed sample. A considerable number of testing procedures have been tried in these co-ordinated schemes and two such internationally accepted testing procedures have been followed.
to isolate seed mycoflora. They include standard blotter technique and agar plate method (Muskett and Malone, 1941 and de tempe, 1953) and these methods were recommended by International seed Testing Association (ISTA, 1973).

**BLOTTER METHOD**

Twenty unsterilized seeds were placed in each petri plate having three moistened blotting papers forming a pad. These petridishes were kept under fluorescent tubes to provide continuous light (CL). In another set the petri plates containing twenty unsterilized seeds were kept under continuous dark (CD) and the third set of petri plates were subjected to alternate day light (ADL), i.e. 12 hrs light period and 12 hrs dark period. In all these experiments three replicates were maintained. A petridish containing no seeds was kept as control to see if there is any contamination carried through the blotting paper.

In the same way surface sterilized seeds with 0.1 per cent mercuric chloride solution (HgCl₂) for about one minute, and later washed three times with distilled water were placed equidistantly on moist blotting paper
pad and were subjected to continuous light, continuous dark and alternate day light. In all instances, after one week of incubation period, seeds were examined for the presence of associated fungi.

**AGAR PLATE METHOD**

A number of media like Potato Dextrose Agar, Csapék's medium, Martins medium were reported by many workers and in this case Csapék's medium was selected for the study.

**Ingredients :**

1. Potassium hydrogen Phosphate ($K_2HPO_4$) ... 1 g
2. Sodium nitrate ($NaNO_3$) ... 2 g
3. Magnesium sulphate ($MgSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O$) ... 500 mg
4. Potassium chloride ($KCl$) ... 500 mg
5. Ferrous sulphate ($FeSO_4 \cdot 7H_2O$) ... 10 mg
6. Sucrose ($C_{12}H_{22}O_{11}$) ... 30 gr
7. Distilled water ... 1000 ml
8. Agar ... 15 gr
9. pH ... 5-6
These ingredients are weighed separately in an analytical balance and dissolved in 1000 ml i.e. one litre of distilled water. The media was poured into conical flasks of 250 ml and plugged with non-absorbant cotton wool. These conical flasks were kept in an autoclave, and sterilized at 15 lbs/inch$^2$, pressure for 15 minutes. The media used 24 hrs after autoclaving. The pH of the media was adjusted between 5 and 6. Just before the use of the medium 5 mg of streptomycin was added to the media to kill the bacteria.

**METHOD**

The molten Czapek's medium was poured into 18 small petri dishes of 4" diameter and allowed to solidify the media. Afterwards 10 unsterilized seeds were placed on the medium and subjected to different parameters like continuous light, continuous dark and alternate day light. Similarly, the experiments were conducted with surface sterilized seeds as in blotter technique. In all in each seed sample six replicates were kept. A sterile blank petri plate with medium was kept as control.
In all the cases the fungal growth from the seeds was examined after six days of incubation. Slides were prepared after carefully teasing the mycelial material in lactophenol–cotton blue and observed under high dry and oil immersion objectives for detailed study of various fungal organisms.

Identification of various fungal forms thus isolated was done with the help of standard reference books (Gillman, 1957; Raper and Fennel, 1965; Ellis, 1971; Subramanian, 1971; Ainsworth and Sussman, 1973; Domsch et al., 1980) and other available relevant literature.