

## Mushroom season

So they grow again. It is still true that every Czech is a mushroom picker. Occasionally reported amounts of mushrooms, which we supposedly take from the forest, are in tens of thousands of tons per year. Now it looks like we can re-enable our passion again.

So what a public health authority can recommend to you before heading for mushrooms?

What matters is what you put mushrooms in. Of course, the best are wicker baskets, where the mushrooms do not evaporate and do not suppress and remain nice. If you do not have a basket, you can use a canvas bag or a net bag. Plastic bags and bags, or plastic buckets where the sponges stick together and evaporate, are unsuitable.

It is also important to properly clean the mushrooms immediately on the spot from the remains of clay and pine needles. Mushrooms infested with insect larvae must be cut and only mushrooms without the worms can be taken home from the forest. If you do not do it in the forest, in a few hours in warm weather, the mushrooms in your basket will be completely red and you will have to throw away a substantial part at home.

After returning home from the forest, process the mushrooms as soon as possible and do not leave them lying outdoors in the sun for some time, for example. Eggs and larvae of insects can also be found in apparently "healthy" mushrooms. If you give them time, they will reliably destroy your catch in a few hours.

What we collect? Of course, only mushrooms that you know reliably. There are mushroom pickers who literally pack up full baskets of all mushrooms and then the more experienced mushroom picker have to help them and throw away a lot of mushrooms. Often on the edge of the woods, we can find whole piles, such as the Boletus of the Gallbladder, which someone in the forest mistook for Boletus and then spilled them near the car. Some types of mushrooms can be very dangerous if you mistake them. For example, the substitution of Green Toadstool with Agaricus, where there is a risk of fatal poisoning, or the substitution of edible and excellent Rosemary toadstool for poisonous toadstools. Recently, the confusion between edible and poisonous species of *Macrolepiota* has also increased.

If you find mushrooms that you do not know, just take 2 to 3 fruiting bodies, this time whole including the stalk (legs), so that later you can reliably identify them. Store them in your cart so they don't confuse you with those you know.

Some types of mushrooms, which are generally considered to be edible, are recommended not to harvest in summer. For example, the known Yellow-footed Boletus, in warm weather, is almost always red, or overgrown with mold and therefore unsuitable for consumption.

Most mushrooms grow at the edge of the forest and in dense vegetation. You must therefore take into account the risk of ticking the tick and after returning from the forest eventually found ticks remove as soon as possible.

And something else about the behavior in the forest. The right mushroomer behaves in such a way that no one will know that he was in the forest for mushrooms. Carefully excavate the mushrooms from the ground and cover the resulting hole so that the mycelium does not dry out. Sliced mushroom remnants can be cleaned up into an old tree stump and does not let them lie freely in the forest. And doesn't even dig up unknown and poisonous mushrooms if come across them. After similar incursions of some mushroom pickers, the forests have long recovered. This devastated forest then testifies to the relationship of some of us to nature and the environment. On the contrary, the reward for good behavior in the forest will be that your "places" will remain reliable for a long time and you will find mushrooms on them regularly.

So in the end, we wish all mushroom pickers rich catches and nice experiences in nature.

