

**Table 2** Effect of inhibitors of protein synthesis on the protease activity of pearl millet extracts

| Inhibitor       | Concentration                 | Protease activity (% control) |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| None            |                               | 100                           |
| Chloramphenicol | $1.5 \times 10^{-3} \text{M}$ | 105                           |
| Cycloheximide   | $2 \times 10^{-4} \text{M}$   | 100                           |
| Ethionne        | $5 \times 10^{-3} \text{M}$   | 95                            |

Extracts obtained from the endosperms of 6-day-old germinated seedlings were used to study the protease activity.

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## NEWS

### AIR POLLUTION IN THE MODERN OFFICE

... "Few work environments would appear safer than the modern office, its sealed windows and carpeted floors filtering out all the harshness of the outside world. In fact, though, it can harbor an array of pollutants ranging from cancer-causing hydrocarbons and various microbes to radioactive radon gas. The reason is often as simple, or, rather, as complicated, as a lack of ventilation. . . . Buildings simply are not inspected for adequate ventilation, as they are for, say, fire safety. As a result, few landlords have any notion of either the actual or the required ventilation rates for their buildings, and no one knows how often the standards are being met. What we do know is that many modern buildings recirculate 80% of all indoor air and that the amount of available fresh air often varies widely within a structure. . . . The energy crisis also spawned significant changes in construction materials and architectural designs. New insulation products, in-

cluding particleboard that contained formaldehyde and foams made with polyurethane and urea-formaldehyde, were approved for general use, despite their tendency to give off toxic gases and residues. At the same time, new, and noxious, chemical sealants were introduced to stem the loss of heated or cooled air, and, in new office towers, windows that open were eliminated in favour of mechanical ventilation systems. The result, for many buildings, was an atmosphere two to five times more polluted than even the dirtiest outdoor urban air."

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