

Screening and optimizing for the best carboxylesterase activities for biotransformation

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Bacterial enzymes play important roles in biotransformation. Most of them can biodegrade complex compounds into simpler ones. Geniposide is extracted from gardenia fruit which is an oriental folk medicine. And the biodegraded genipin is very easily to become blue and red when reacts with amino acids. The blue and red pigments are used to being natural food colorants in Japan and Asia. Recently, the concept of food safety has been increased by days. The requirement of natural food colorants is getting more and more in industries. The natural food color gardenia red is manufactured through the hydrolysis of the methyl ester of iridoid glucoside. Gardenia blue is also made from iridoid glucoside. In order to produce natural food colorants - gardenia red, we need the strains which have good esterase and β -glucosidase activity. In this study, we screened 162 bacteria strains for the best esterase activities and then optimize them. *Chryseobacterium oranimense* 3--5(Y) isolate showed the best esterase activity. The maximum enzyme activity was then adjusted by growth time and culture conditions. YPD medium was good for strain 3--5(Y) to grow, however, NB was good for esterase activity. The best enzyme activity was showed while the pH of medium was around 6 and the best amount of growth was around pH 8. The most suitable temperature for 3--5(Y) to grow was around 25-30 °C. YPD medium was used to amplify bacteria population for 12hr and was replaced by NB medium to maximize microbial esterase activity. The best enzyme activity was showed while the pH of medium was around 6 at 25-30°C. *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* JB-3 isolate showed the best β -glucosidase activity in our laboratory and had been optimized. Therefore, we will use strain 3--5(Y) and JB-3 to transform geniposide into genipin-amion acid complex.

Key words: esterase; genipin-amion acid complex