

# **FAST SCREENING METHOD FOR DETECTING LYSINE-PRODUCING YEASTS**

Chike-Mozie, L.O.<sup>1\*</sup>, Ekwealor, C.C.<sup>2</sup>, Ajogwu, T.C.<sup>3</sup>., Chibor-Ekweanya, C.<sup>4</sup> and Ekwealor, I.A.<sup>5</sup>  
[lyndambelu@yahoo.com](mailto:lyndambelu@yahoo.com)

Chike-Mozie, L.O. Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ekwealor, C.C. Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ajogwu, T.C. Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

Chibor-Ekweanya C. Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

Ekwealor, I.A. Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria

## ABSTRACT

**Aim:** To screen for active Lysine -producing yeasts

**Study Design:** Examination of different kinds of fruits

**Place and Duration of Study:** Department of Applied Microbiology and Brewing, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, from January, 2014 and July, 2015

**Methodology:** Yeast isolates (100) recovered from different fruits were screened for lysine producers on solid agar medium. Halo growth of the lysine auxotroph, *Escherichia coli*, seeded in the agar medium indicate lysine production by the yeast isolate. Lysine accumulation in submerged medium by the isolate was examined.

**Results:** Five of the yeast isolates observed to be active lysine producers accumulated lysine yields of 0.20µg/ml to 0.90µg/ml in submerged medium. The lysine level accumulated in the broth culture of the yeast was observed to be proportional to the halo growth of the *Escherichia coli* on solid agar medium.

**Conclusion:** Yeasts capable of producing lysine were isolated from fruits and a fast screening method for their detection on solid agar medium have been identified.

**Key words:** Yeasts, Fruits, Lysine production, Halo growth, Screening method

## INTRODUCTION

Yeast is a group of fungi in which unicellular form is predominant (1). As a group of microorganisms, yeasts have cosmopolitan distribution (2). They have been isolated from natural substrates like leaves, flowers, sweet fruits, grains, exudates of trees, insects, dung and soil (3).

The useful physiological properties of yeasts have led to their use in the field of biotechnology, fermentation of sugars by yeasts being the oldest and largest of this technology (4). Several investigations have been carried out in different natural and crop growing environment so as to obtain better knowledge of yeast diversity and to define the impact of this on food products (5).

L-Lysine is an essential amino acid mainly used as feed additive in the animal industry for such animals like broilers, poultry and swine (6, 7, 8, 9, 10) and as supplement for humans improving the feed quality by increasing the absorption of other amino acids (11).

Several microbiological organisms including fungi and bacteria are known to produce lysine (13, 14, 15). However, not much is known about yeasts and lysine production.

This study was, therefore, conducted to isolate lysine producing yeast using a fast screening method.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Isolation of Yeasts**

Forty fruit samples (e.g. apple, pineapple, banana, pawpaw, water melon, oranges) were collected randomly from different localities in Awka town, Anambra state. The fruit samples were cut and 10g sliced or mashed and homogenized in sterile water using a warring blender (Panasonic Mixer Blender) with 100ml of 0.85% sterile physiological saline. The homogenate was then placed in a 250ml Erlenmeyer flask and the flask shaken for 10min on a rotary shaker (120rpm) to release the yeast cells into the suspension. The suspension was submitted to rest and 1ml of the non-sedimented portion diluted tenfold. 0.1ml of  $10^{-2}$  dilution was spread inoculated on Sabouraud Dextrose Agar (SDA Oxoid) plate containing 0.05mg/ml chloramphenicol, to prevent bacterial growth. After 24 to 48hr incubation at  $27^{\circ}\text{C}$ , the isolates were recovered, purified and stored at  $4^{\circ}\text{C}$  on SDA slants.

### **Screening of isolates for lysine production on solid agar medium**

The isolates were screened for lysine production following a modified method described by Ozulu *et al.* (16). A minimal agar medium [Glucose, 4.0g;  $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$ , 2.0g;  $\text{K}_2\text{HPO}_4$ , 0.05g,  $\text{KH}_2\text{PO}_4$ , 0.05g;  $\text{MgSO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 0.1g;  $\text{Fe SO}_4 \cdot 7\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 0.001g;  $\text{MnSO}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 0.001g;  $\text{CaCO}_3$ , 2.0g; Agar, 15.0g,  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ , 1L, pH adjusted to 6.0 with 6N HCl] in a 250ml Erlenmeyer flask, was sterilized at  $115^{\circ}\text{C}$  for 15mins, allowed to cool to  $40^{\circ}\text{C}$  and then aseptically seeded with 2ml (ca.  $5.8 \times 10^8$  cells/ml) of a 24h broth culture of a lysine auxotroph, *Escherichia coli*. The molten agar medium was poured into Petri plates, allowed to solidify and then spread inoculated with the isolates. Uninoculated plates were kept as control. The plates were observed for halo growth of the *E.coli* auxotroph after 96h incubation at  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$ , which is indicative of lysine production by the isolates. Further studies were carried out on the suspected active lysine producers.

### **Lysine accumulation by the isolates in submerged medium.**

Seed inoculum: the medium for seed culture [peptone, 10.0g; yeast extract, 10.0g; NaCl, 5.0g, H<sub>2</sub>O 1L; pH adjusted to 6.0 with 6N HCL] was sterilized at 121<sup>0</sup>C for 15min. Two loopful of the isolate was inoculated into a 100ml Erlenmeyer flask containing 20ml of the seed medium. The flask was incubated for 18h on a rotary shaker (120rpm) at 30<sup>0</sup>C.

### **Shake Flask Fermentation**

Lysine production by the isolates in submerged medium was investigated following the method described by Ekwealor and Obeta (15). Fermentation medium [Glucose, 20.0g; (NH<sub>4</sub>)<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub>, 10.0g; K<sub>2</sub>HPO<sub>4</sub>, 0.02g; KH<sub>2</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>, 1.0g; MgSO<sub>4</sub>.7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.4g; FeSO<sub>4</sub>.7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.002g, MnSO<sub>4</sub>.7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.4g; FeSO<sub>4</sub>.7H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.002g, MnSO<sub>4</sub>.4H<sub>2</sub>O, 0.002g; CaCO<sub>3</sub>, 20.0g; Agar, 15.0g; H<sub>2</sub>O, 1L; pH adjusted to 6.0 with 6N HCl] was sterilized at 115<sup>0</sup>C for 10min. A 2ml volume (10%V/V) of the seed culture was inoculated into 100ml Erlenmeyer flask containing 20ml of the fermentation medium. Duplicate flasks were prepared and uninoculated flasks served as control. After 72h incubation on a rotary shaker (140rpm) at 30<sup>0</sup>C, lysine accumulation in the broth culture was determined.

### **Assay of lysine in the broth culture**

Lysine produced in the broth culture of the isolate was determined by acidic ninhydrin method of Chinard (17). A 5ml volume of the culture broth was centrifuged at 5,000Xg for 20min. To 1ml of the supernatant in a test tube was added 1ml of glacial acetic acid and 1ml of reagent solution (an acid mixture of 0.4ml of 6M orthophosphoric acid, 0.6ml of glacial acetic acid and 25mg of ninhydrin per ml of the acid mixture). The blank test tube contained 1ml of glacial acetic acid, 1ml of the reagent solution without ninhydrin and 1ml of the supernatant. Both tubes, the reacting mixture and the blank were capped, mixed properly and heated to a temperature of 100<sup>0</sup>C in a water bath for 1h. The tubes were cooled rapidly under tap water and the content of each tube brought to a final volume of 5ml with 2ml glacial acetic acid. The value of the reacting mixture was obtained from a spectrophotometer (VWR DS2 – 500 - 2) at 515nm. The lysine present in the supernatant was extrapolated from a standard lysine curve.

## Results and Discussion

A total of 100 yeast isolates recovered from different kinds of fruits were screened for lysine production on solid agar medium seeded with lysine auxotroph, *Escherichia coli*. Halo growth of the *E.coli* auxotroph on the surface of the agar medium spread inoculated with the yeast isolate is an indication that the isolate produces lysine. This observation is similar to that reported by Ozulu *et al.*(16), in their search for methionine-producing bacteria. They noted that only bacterial isolates that released methionine into the agar medium stimulated halo growth of the *E.coli* auxotroph, seeded on the agar.

Five of the yeast isolates observed to be active lysine producers were studied for lysine production in submerged medium. Table 1 shows the lysine yields of the yeast isolates and their halo growths on solid agar medium.

**Table 1. Lysine yields of the yeast isolates in submerged culture.**

Isolate No	Yeast Source	Halo growth of <i>E.coli</i>	Lysine (mg/ml)
MS1	Orange	+++	0.953
MS2	Grapes	+++	0.842
WM	Water melon	++	0.440
PN	Pineapple	++	0.516
MS3	Grapes	+	0.200

It is important to observe (Table 1) that the lysine accumulated in the broth cultures of the yeasts were proportional to the halo growths of the *E.coli* on solid medium. The more the halo growth of the *E.coli* the more likely the production of a high lysine yield by the yeast isolate. This observation is supported by the work of Ekwealor and Obeta (18), who noted a high lysine yield in submerged medium with increased halo growth of the bacterial isolate on the solid agar medium.

## CONCLUSION

The experimental work shows that yeasts capable of producing lysine can be isolated from fruits, and a fast screening method for their detection on solid agar medium identified. Lysine produced in the broth culture of the yeast was observed to be proportional to the halo growth of the *E.coli* auxotroph on solid medium.

## REFERENCES

1. Maragatham, C. and Panneerselvam, A. (2011). Isolation, identification and characterization of wine yeast from rotten papaya fruits for wine production. *Advances in Applied Science Research*. 2(2): 93-98
2. Muhammed Mushtaq, Sharfun-Nahar and Hashmi, M.H. (2004). Isolation and identification of yeast flora from soil of Karachi, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Botany*. 36(1): 173-180
3. Spencer, J.F.T and Spencer, D.M. (1997). *Yeasts in natural and artificial habitats*. Springer – Verlag Berlin Heidelberg p.386.
4. Chatterjee, S., Ghosh, B. and Rani Ray, R. (2011). Isolation and characterization of local yeast strains from waste, fruit juices, jaggery and dahi samples. *International Journal of Chemical Sciences*. 9(2): 647-656.
5. Ma'aruf A.G, Noroul Asyikeen, Z., Sahilah .A.M and Mohd Khan, A. (2011). Leavening ability of yeasts isolated from different local fruits in bakery products. *Sains Malaysiana*. 40(12): 1413-1419.
6. Oh, J.W., Kim, S.J., Cho, Y.J., Park, N.H and Lee, J.H. (1933). Strain of *Corynebacterium glutamicum* and method for producing L-lysine US 5268293 A
7. Ishii, T., Yokomori, M. and Miwa, H. (1997). Process for producing L-lysine by fermentation. US5650304

8. Kreutzer, C., Hans, S., Osnabruck, R.M., Mockel, B., Pfeffere, W., Eggeling, L., Sahm, H. and Patek, M. (2001). Lysine producing Corynebacteria and process for the preparation of L-lysine. US20016200785
9. Bathe, B., Reynen, C. and Pfefferle, W. (2004). L-Lysine fermentation. WO04013340A2
10. Zelder, O., Klopprogge, C., Schoner, H., Hafner, S., Kroger, B., Kiefer, P. and Heinzle, E. (2005). L-Lysine fermentation. WO 05059139A2
11. Anastassiadis, S. (2007). L-Lysine fermentation. Recent Patents on Biotechnology 1:11-24
12. Tauro, P., Ramachandra-Rao, T.N., Johar, D.S., Sreenivasan, A. and Subrahmanyam, V. (1963). L-Lysine production by Ustilaginales fungi. Agriculture and Biological Chemistry 27: 227-235
13. Nakayama, K., Kitada, S., Seto, Z. and Kinoshita, S. (1961). Studies on lysine fermentation I. the control mechanism on lysine accumulation by homoserine and threonine. Journal of General and Applied Microbiology. 7:145-154.
14. Abdul, H.S., Abdul, H. and Gul, M.K. (2002). Fermentative production of L-lysine: fungal fermentation and mutagenesis. A review. Pakistan Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences 15(2): 29-35.
15. Ekwealor, I.A and Obeta, J.N. (2005). Studies on lysine production by *Bacillus megaterium*. African Journal of Biotechnology. 4(7): 633-638
16. Ozulu, U.S., Nwanah, O.U., Ekwealor, C.C, Dike, S.K., Nwikpo, C.L. and Ekwealor, I.A. (2012). A new approach to screening for methionine-producing bacteria. British Microbiology Research Journal 2(1): 36-39.
17. Chinard, F.P. (1952). Photometric estimation of proline and ornithine. *Journal of Biological Chemistry*. 199:91-95.

18. Ekwealor, I.A. and Obeta, I.N. (2000). Studies on production and evaluation of L-lysine from soil ecovars of *Bacillus megaterium*. PhD Thesis, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.