

**DEVELOPMENT OF A SPECIFIC PCR-BASED ASSAY FOR THE DETECTION
OF *ESCHERICHIA COLI* O157: H7**

By

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**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia in
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science
August 2004**

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the Master of Science

DEVELOPMENT OF A SPECIFIC PCR-BASED ASSAY FOR THE DETECTION OF *ESCHERICHIA COLI* O157: H7

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A total of nine *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 isolates were originally isolated from imported Indian beef purchased from local retail markets. These nine *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 isolates were confirmed as *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 by their positive growth characteristics on Rainbow agar O157 and PCR assay for the detection of the presence of the H7 (*fliC*) gene unique to *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Published specific primers *FLICH* (625 bp) of the *fliC* gene encoding the H7 antigen were utilized in the specific PCR assay. Three of the *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 isolates were selected for the amplification of their H7 (*fliC*) gene. The amplicon of the PCR assay were successfully cloned into pGEM-T vector and sequenced. The sequence of the *Escherichia coli*

O157:H7 that was obtained from sequencing was analyzed. This sequence was identified using Basic Local Alignment Search Tools (Blast) program. Based on the sequence obtained, primer pairs were designed to detect the *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, but only Sk7 and Sk8 were found to be specific for detection of locally isolated *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Sk7 and Sk8 produced an amplicon size of 520 bp and 603 bp respectively against all tested locally isolated *Escherichia coli* O157:H7. Both new primers were specific against *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, as they did not produce any amplicons from the 32 isolats representing 20 different bacterial species. DNA hybridization analysis of 10 other bacterial species, including *E. coli*, *Salmonella* and other isolates showed that the probe (SkP) reacted only with *Escherichia coli* O157:H7 isolates.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada senat Univetsiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

PENGHASILAN PENGGUNAAN TEKNIK SPECIFIK RANTAIAN POLIMERASE (PCR)- MELALUI TEKNIK PENGESANAN *ESCHERICHIA COLI* O157:H7

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Pencilan *E.coli* yang digunakan dalam kajian ini adalah berasal daripada daging lembu yang diperolehi dari pasaraya tempatan. Sembilan pencilan *E.coli* disahkakeputusan positif ciri-ciri pertumbuhan koloni atas Rainbow agar O157 dan analisa teknik rantaian polimerase (PCR) dalam pengenalpastian kehadiran gen "*fliC*" yang unik kepada *E.coli* O157: H7. Primer yang digunakan dalam teknik rantaian polimerase khas merupakan primer penerbitan khas iaitu *FLICH* (625 bp) yang mengekodkan antigen H7. Tiga pencilan *E.coli* O157: H7 telah dipilih untuk mengamplifikasikan gen H7 (*fliC*)nya. Hasil amplifikasi (amplikon) dari PCR telah berjaya diklonkan kedalam ke dalam vector PGEM-T dan jujukan.

Analisis jujukan *E.coli* O157: H7 dari teknik jujukan gen dilakukan. Jujukan ini dikenalpasti melalui program Basic Local Alignment Search Tools (BLAST) yang disediakan oleh 'National Center for Biotechnology Information' (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>). Berdasarkan jujukan yang diperolehi, beberapa primer baru telah direka untuk mengesan *E.coli* O157: H7. Akan tetapi, hanya SK7 dan SK8 di dapati spesifik atas pengesanan *E.coli* O157: H7. SK 7 memberi saiz amplifikasi 520 bp manakala SK8 menghasilkan 603bp terhadap semua kultur *E.coli* O157: H7 yang dikaji. Kedua-dua primer baru adalah spesifik terhadap *E.coli* O157: H7 disebabkan ia tidak memberikan sebarang hasil amplifikasi daripada 32 strain bacteria yang mewakili 20 spesies bacteria yang lain. Analisis DNA hibridasi untuk 10 spesies bacteria lain termasuk *E.coli*, Salmonella dan isolat bacteria lain memaparkan bahawa probe SKP hanya memberi reaksi terhadap *Escherichia coli* O157:H7.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all, I would like to express my extended gratitude to Almighty God for I am very thankful to him for giving me the patience, wisdom and also protecting me while this research was done. I would like to express my most sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to these wonderful people for their many contributions throughout my studies:

I am very grateful to my supervisor Professor Dr. Son Radu for his continuous support, patience, invaluable advice, and guidance through out my project. I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my co-supervisors Professor Dr. Gulam Rusul Rahmat Ali and Dr. Clemente Michael Wong for their persistent assistance and exceptional generosity.

My deepest thanks to my family who has been patient with my tight schedule throughout my studies, thank you for giving me love and support.

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude to all the postgraduate students of the Food Borne Pathogen Laboratory UPM. My Special to my friends Mr. Cheah Yoke Kqueen, Mr. Mohan, Mrs. Noorzaleha, Miss Narumon, Miss Christina for their invaluable advice, guidance and friendship that kept me going on.

I certify that an Examination Committee met onto conduct the final examination of Sushi Kauri on her Master of Science thesis entitled *DETECTION OF ESCHERICHIA COLI O157: H7 USING POLYMERASE CHAIN REACTION* in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or currently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vi
APPROVAL	vii
DECLARATION	ix
LIST OF TABLES	xiii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xix
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1.1
1.1 Objective of study	1.4
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	2.1
2.1 <i>Escherichia coli</i> (<i>E.coli</i>)	2.1
2.2 <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	2.2
2.2.1 Pathogenesis of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	2.2
2.2.2 History of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7	2.4
2.2.3 Detection of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7	2.6
2.2.4 Treatment and prevention of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7	2.8
2.3 Polymerase chain reaction (PCR)	2.9
2.4 Primers for PCR	2.13
2.5 Optimization of PCR	2.14
2.6 Electrophoresis	2.15
2.7 Cloning	2.17
2.7.1 Ligation	2.18

2.7.2 Transformation	2.18
2.8 Restriction Enzymes	2.19
2.9 Sequencing	2.20
2.10 Development of DNA Probes	2.23
2.11 DNA hybridization	2.24

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Experiment set-up	3.1
3.2 Re-Identifying isolated <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolates from imported Indian beef	3.2
3.2.1 Bacterial isolates	3.2
3.3 Preliminary confirmation of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolated from Indian beef by Rainbow agar	3.3
3.3.1 Rainbow Agar O157	3.3
3.4 Confirmation <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 by <i>fliC</i> gene detection using Polymerase Chain Reaction	3.3
3.4.1 DNA Isolation (QIAGEN DNeasy tissue kit)	3.3
3.4.2 DNA Extraction by direct cell lysis	3.5
3.4.3 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	3.5
3.4.4 Agarose Gel Electrophoresis	3.6
3.5 PCR cloning and sequencing of the <i>fliC</i> gene of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolates	3.7
3.5.1 Total genomic extraction	3.7
3.5.2 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	3.7
3.5.3 Gel extraction (QIAquick Gel Extraction Kit)	3.8
3.5.4 pGEM-T Cloning of PCR product	3.9
3.5.5 Plasmid Miniprep	3.10
3.5.6 Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)	3.11
3.5.7 Restriction Enzyme Analysis	3.12
3.5.8 Sequence analysis	3.12
3.6 Designing specific Primer	3.13
3.7 Primer Optimization and Screening of primers with other bacterial strains	3.14
3.8 Southern Blotting	3.16
3.8.1 Probe labeling	3.16
3.8.2 Probe Quantitation	3.17

3.8.3 Alkaline Transfer	3.18
3.8.4 Hybridization	3.19
3.8.5 Detection	3.20
4 RESULTS	4.1
4.1 Identifying <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolated from Indian beef	4.1
4.2 Preliminary confirmation of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolated from Indian beef by Rainbow Agar TM <i>E. coli</i> O157	4.2
4.3 Confirmation of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 by <i>fliC</i> gene detection using PCR	4.3
4.4 Obtaining nucleotide sequence by cloning the <i>fliC</i> gene of <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 isolates	4.4
4.4.1 DNA isolation	4.4
4.4.2 PCR amplification of <i>fliC</i> gene from <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 isolated from Indian beef	4.5
4.4.3 pGEM-T Cloning of PCR product	4.6
4.4.4 Analysis of Recombinant colonies	4.7
4.4.5 Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) to determine the size of insert (625 bp)	4.8
4.4.6 Restriction Endonuclease	4.9
4.5 Sequence and Homology	4.10
4.6 Designing Specific Primer	4.12
4.7 Primer optimization	4.15
4.8 Detection of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	4.20
4.9 Screening against other bacterial species	4.23
4.10 DNA hybridization	4.30
4.11 Discussion	4.33
5 DISCUSSION	5.1
5.1 Extraction of genonic DNA	5.1

5.2	Preliminary confirmation of locally <i>E.coli</i> O157:H7 from beef by Rainbow Agar TM <i>E.coli</i> O157	5.2
5.3	Confirmation of locally isolated <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7 by the <i>fliC</i> gene detection using PCR	5.3
5.4	Cloning of <i>fliC</i> gene	5.4
5.5	DNA Sequencing	5.6
5.6	Designing specific primers	5.6
5.7	Detection of <i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	5.8
5.8	Screening against other bacterial species	5.10
5.9	DNA hybridization	5.11
6	CONCLUSION	6.1
	REFERENCES	R.1
	APPENDICES	A.1
	BIODATA OF THE AUTHOR	B.1