



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**THE ISOLATION OF ENDOPHYTIC FUNGI FROM PLANTS AND THE
DETERMINATION OF AMYLASE AND LIPASE ACTIVITIES**

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PENGESAHAN

Dengan ini adalah disahkan bahawa projek yang bertajuk “THE ISOLATION OF ENDOPHYTIC FUNGI FROM PLANTS AND THE DETERMINATION OF AMYLASE AND LIPASE ACTIVITIES” telah disiapkan serta dikemukakan kepada Jabatan Mikrobiologi oleh HANNAH SHOBANA A/P SAMUEL DEVADASAN (164012) sebagai syarat untuk kursus BMY 4999 projek.

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ABSTRACT

Endophytes refer to a group of microorganisms that are able to grow either intracellularly or intercellularly in plant tissues of higher plants without causing any symptoms or disease in or on those plants. Currently, endophytic fungi are being studied as sources of new enzyme applications. In this project, ten different plant samples were collected from Taman Herba, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM). The isolated fungi were screened for the production of extracellular enzymes amylase and lipase. Out of the ten samples which were tested, four samples were further studied, two for each enzyme. Two of the endophytic fungi were identified as *Aspergillus* sp. and *Penicillium* sp. respectively. *Aspergillus* sp is known to have a high amylase activity which explains why the sample which was identified as *Aspergillus* showed a maximum amylase activity of 0.002 U/ml. The sample identified to produce lipase activity which is *Penicillium* sp. showed a maximum enzyme activity of 13.5 U/ml. The yield for lipase was much greater than the yield for amylase. The other two samples could not be identified as those fungi are non-spore producing fungi.

ABSTRAK

Endofitik merujuk kepada jenis mikroorganisma yang boleh tumbuh sama ada di dalam atau di luar tisu tumbuh-tumbuhan kelas tinggi tanpa mendatangkan penyakit kepada tumbuh-tumbuhan tersebut. Kulat endofitik sedang dikaji sebagai sumber aplikasi enzim baru. Dalam projek ini, sepuluh sampel tumbuhan yang berbeza telah diambil dari Taman Herba, UPM. Eksperimen secara kualitatif dan kuantitatif telah dijalankan ke atas kulat yang telah diambil dari tumbuh-tumbuhan untuk pengeluaran enzim amylase dan lipase. Daripada sepuluh sampel yang diuji, empat sampel telah dipilih untuk dikaji secara mendalam, dua untuk setiap enzim. Dua daripada kulat endofitik telah dikenal pasti sebagai *Aspergillus* sp. dan *Penicillium* sp. masing-masing. *Aspergillus* sp diketahui mempunyai aktiviti amilase tinggi yang menjelaskan mengapa sampel yang dikenal pasti sebagai *Aspergillus* menunjukkan aktiviti amylase maksimum 0.002 U/ml. Sampel yang telah dikenalpasti untuk menghasilkan aktiviti lipase iaitu *Penicilium* sp. menunjukkan aktiviti enzim maksimum 13.5 U/ml. Hasil untuk lipase adalah lebih besar daripada hasil untuk amylase. Kedua-dua sampel lain yang tidak dapat dikenalpasti oleh sebab sampel tersebut adalah kulat yang tidak menghasilkan spora.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Endophytic fungi have been discovered in every plant species examined and it has been estimated that there is over one million endophytic fungi existing in nature (Petrini, 1991). Endophytic fungi are fungi that form infections in the leaves, stems or roots of healthy plants that cannot be noticed with the naked eyes. Endophytic fungi usually protect the host plants from natural enemies (Carroll, 1988). They have this unique ability to produce similar compounds produced by the host plant and also a diverse amount of bioactive compounds, which is why endophytic fungi are capable of protecting its host against herbivores and pathogens (Wicklow et al., 2005). Studies of endophytic fungi in leaves have been done for many host species where their significance such as common symbionts and possible mutualists of plants was recognised (Carroll et al., 1977). Endophytic fungi can be isolated from any parts of plants such as stems, flowers, leaves and roots (Park et al., 2012). Endophytes are a novel source of potentially useful medicinal compounds which are on research to deal with alarming health problems caused by various cancers, drug-resistant bacteria, parasitic protozoans and fungi (Strobel, 2003). In this project, I will be working on identifying endophytic fungi which are able to produce the enzymes amylase and lipase, and also determining the activities of these enzymes in the endophytes through designated enzyme assays. Amylases are a group of hydrolases that can specifically cleave the α -glycosidic linkage in starch. Two important groups of amylases are glucoamylase and α -amylase. Glucoamylase (exo-1,4- α -D-glucan glucohydrolase) produces single glucose units from nonreducing ends of amylose

and amylopectin (Anto, 2006), whereas, α -amylases (endo-1,4- α -D-glucan glucohydro-lase) are extracellular enzymes that randomly cleave the 1,4- α -D-glucosidic linkage between adjacent glucose units inside the linear amylose chain (Pandey, 2005). α -amylases are widely distributed in nature and can be derived from various sources, such as plants, animals and microorganisms (Omemu, 2005). Lipases are a class of hydrolase which is able to catalyse the hydrolysis of triglycerides to fatty acids and glycerol (Figure 1) (Singh, 2011).

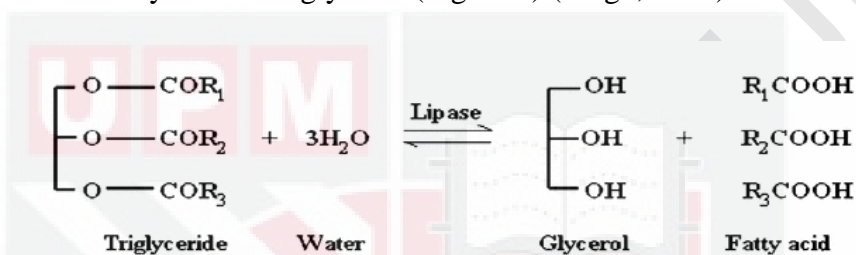


Figure 1: Hydrolysis of triglycerides by lipase

Due to the unique abilities which lipases possess, they are commonly used in industries such as detergent formulation, oleochemical industry, biofuels, food and dairy, nutrition, agro-chemical, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals, sewage treatment, leather industry and paper manufacturing (Gupta et al., 2003; Hasan et al., 2006; Kademi et al., 2005).

However, there are still many diverse endophytic fungal species which have not been discovered. The enzymes produced by these endophytic fungi are not fully explored and studied.

The objectives of this project are:

- To isolate and identify endophytes producing amylase and lipase
- To determine the amylase and lipase activity

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