LOSCHMIDT
LABORATORIES

6. Lecture - Biofuels

Bi7430 Molecular Biotechnology

- Alternatives to fossil fuels (crude oil, coal,...)
- **Plant and animal biomass**
- **Primary biofuels like wood or crop waste used since** ancient ages
- Most of the currently used biofuels are plant-based
- Algae and bacteria are promising sources of biofuels for the future

Generations of biofuels

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First Generation

- Derived from edible plants grown on arable land
- Ethanol and butanol produced via yeast fermentation.
- Crops include wheat, sugar cane, and oily seeds.
- Attributed as a potential reason for recent spike in food prices.
- Net energy negative.

Second Generation

- Produced from nonedible crops grown on non-arable land.
- Sources have high \bullet lignocellulosic content, which include wood and organic waste.
- Potential to be net energy positive.

Third Generation

- Produced from algae and other microorganisms.
- Resilient organisms that can be grown from sunlight, CO₂ and brackish water.
- Does not use arable land.
- Fastest growing of all biofuel sources.
- Potentially carbon neutral

Fourth Generation

- Genetic engineering ٠. of organisms for efficient production of biofuels.
- Includes altering lipid characteristics and introducing lipid excretion pathways.
- Aim to be carbon negative by creating artificial carbon sinks.

Generations of biofuels

Biofuels in the world

 Vast majority of the biofuels production is based in the US, Brazil and Europe

Why are biofuels important?

- Renewable sources of energy
- **E** Lowering of carbon emissions
- **E** Lower energy demands than 'traditional' processes
- Biomass can be used for extraction of biologically active compounds and as biofuel
- Waste is biodegradable or can be used further

Crude oil consumption

Algae as biofuels sources

Advantages and disadvantages of biofuel production using microalgae.

ALGAL BIOMASS PRODUCTION SYSTEMS

Fig. 1. Carbon dioxide fixation and main steps of algal biomass technologies.

Chemical compositions of algae on a dry matter basis (%).

- Methylesters of unsaturated fatty acids
- Better biodegradability than fossil-based diesel
- **High energy capacity**
- Can corrode the engine parts
- **Higher health hazard than fossil fuels**

■ In the EU 5 % of biodiesel has to be mixed with liquid fossil fuels

Data source: International Energy Agency, 2000-12.

US Biodiesel Production 2004-2008

Global biodiesel production by feedstock

Global Biodiesel Production by Country

Source: Diester Industrie International EBB

Increase in EU rapeseed area in 2014

Figure 3. EU Per Capita Consumption of Vegetable Oil and Biodiesel

*Biodiesel consumption is total industrial consumption, converted from '000Barrels a day using EIA's unit conversion of 158.99 liters per barrel.

** 2012-13 biodiesel consumption based on percent change from USDA estimates.

Sources: Vegetable Oil Consumption, USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, Production, Supply and Distribution database; per capita calculated using World Bank, World Development Indicators data on population. Biodiesel Consumption is from US Energy Information Administration, International Energy Statistics.

Fig. 1. Microalgae biodiesel value chain stages.

Fig. 3. Direct liquefaction of microalgae and oil from liquefaction products by CH₂Cl₂ extraction.

Fig. 4. Primary oil from algal cells by liquefaction of hexane extraction.

Comparison of microalgae with other biodiesel feedstocks.

Yields of bio-oil by pyrolysis from alga samples at different temperatures (K).

Table 1 | Comparative study between algal biomass and terrestrial plants for biodiesel production.

Bioethanol

- **Production depends on content of fermentable** sugars
- **Production higher than 4 % (40 g/L) is necessary to** make the proces economically feasible

Table 1. Comparison of the productivities of lignocellulosic biomass and seaweeds

^aMean value calculated from the amount of biomass produced for 8 y; bcalculated value.

Bioethanol production

- Cells are pretreated using acid or enzymatic hydrolysis
- **Hydrothermal pretreatment may be applied**

- **Ethanol fermentation by bacteria or yeast**
	- *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*
	- **•** or technical cultures
- Mannitol cannot be converted by *S. cerevisiae*

Table 3. Advantages and disadvantages of various natural microorganisms regarding industrial ethanol production. Adapted from [98] with permission.

a) +: Fermentation possible; -: Fermentation not possible

b) +: Major product(s); -: Minor product(s)
c) ++: High tolerance; +: Moderate tolerance; --: Poor tolerance

 $d)$ +: O2 needed; -: O2 not needed

Table 2. Various hydrolysis treatments methods and their bioethanol yields

a) SHF: separate hydrolysis and fermentation; SSF: simultaneous saccharification and fermentation

b) Sonicated algal biomass was utilized

c) Lipid-extracted algal biomass was utilized

d) Agar pulp was extracted after alkali treatment and hydrolyzed

e) Algal biomass received extremely low acid pretreatment.

Table 6. Polysaccharides, sugars in them and organisms to convert these sugars into ethanol

^aMannitol is not a polysaccharides, but a major sugars in brown seaweeds; bethanol production from 3,6-anhydrogalactose has not been reported.

Micro, microalgae; Macro, macroalgae; SHF, separate hydrolysis and fermentation; SSF, simultaneous saccharification and fermentation. Several studies were optimisation experiments containing various combinations of feedstocks/fermentors/pretreatments in these cases the most successful experiment is reported in the table.

RAN

Table 4. Bioethanol production from SSF and SHF tested on various algal strains

Hydrogen production

Hydrogen production from natural gas

■ CH₄ + H₂O \rightleftharpoons CO + 3 H₂ (at 700 – 1100 °C) – steam reforming

Hydrogen from coal

Biohydrogen production

Biohydrogen production

Nitrogenase in cyanobacteria

Fig. 2. Nitrogenase(Nase)-mediated hydrogen evolution in a heterocyst of nitrogen-fixing heterocystous cyanobacteria [10, 30, 32]. The oxygen and hydrogen evolution are carried out separately and the energy-rich carbohydrate $(CH₂O)$ is used as the electron source in the oxygen-free heterocyst.

$$
N_2 + 8H^+ + 8e + 16ATP \to 2NH_3 + H_2 + 16ADP + 16Pi \tag{2}
$$

 $8H^+ + 8e + 16ATP \rightarrow 4H_2 + 16ADP + 16Pi$

 \ldots 3

Note:

The specific hydrogen evolution rate based on per gram of dry cell mass or chlorophyll a (in blanket). a.

Hydrogen productivity per liquid volume of photobioreactor during hydrogen evolution stage, not \mathbf{b} . including the time and space required for cell growth and enzyme induction. The value in blankets is the energy productivity (kJ/L/hr) based on the heat of combusion of hydrogen (0.24 kJ/mmol) at 25 °C.

- c. 1 W/m² = 4.6 μ molE/m²/s (APR). APR: photosynthetically active radiation that includes light energy of 400-700 nm in wavelength.
- d. 12 hour light and 12 hour dark.

Table 2. Direct biophotolysis hydrogen production by green microalgae in laboratory photobioreactors.

Organism	Maximum hydrogen evolution (mmol/g) Chl/hr ^a	Maximum hydrogen productivity $(mmol/L/hr)^b$ $(kJ/L/hr)^b$	Gas for growth; Carbon source; Light intensity $(w/m^2)^c$	H_2 evolution medium; Light intensity $(w/m^2)^c$	Ref
Chlamydomona	5.94	0.094	$97%$ air	Argon;	$[54]$
s reinhardtii		(0.022)	3% CO ₂ ;	S-free acetate	
cc124			Acetate (17mM);	(17mM);	
			43	65	
Platymonas	$(0.001)^{a}$	0.002	Air;	N_2 ;	$[46]$
subcordiformis		(0.0005)	Seawater	S-free seawater;	
			nutrients;	35	
			$22(L/D)^d$		
Chlamydomona	5.91	0.48	Air;	Argon;	$[55]$
s reinhardtii		(0.12)	Acetate $(17mM)$;	S-free acetate	
cc1036			22	(17mM);	
				26	

Note:

The specific hydrogen evolution based on per gram of chlorophyll or 10⁹ cells (in blanket). a.

b. See Table 1.

See Table 1. c_{-}

d. 14-hour light and 10-hour dark.

Table 2. A list of the processes integrated with the production of H2 from dark fermentation (DF, dark fermentation; PF, photofermentation; MEC, microbial electrolysis cell; BEH, bio-electrohydrolysis).

Biogas

Proteins ■ Carbohydrates ⊠ Lipids Methane production and pretreatment improvement for microalgal biomass.

Methane production and pretreatment improvement for macroalgal biomass.

Current approaches in biofuels production

- **Single gene targeted approaches**
	- Insertion of specific enzyme
	- Engineering of RUBISCO and/or PS II
	- Enzyme engineering

- Systemic approaches, metabolic engineering
	- Multiple insertions/deletions
	- **Novel metabolic pathways**
	- Tampering the central carbon metabolism

Figure 2. Schematic representation of engineered biochemical pathways in cyanobacteria. Core metabolism of photosynthetic processes is shown in black text. Branch points utilized for the production of various compounds discussed in this review are indicated (highlighted pathways) with relevant enzymes catalyzing specific reactions indicated in italics. Abbreviations: 3-PGA, 3-phosphoglycerate; AAD, aldehyde decarbonylase; ADH, alcohol dehydrogenase II; ALA, 2-acetolactate; AlsS, acetolactate synthase; DHIV, 2,3-dihydroxy-isovalerate; F6P, fructose 6-phosphate; FNR, ferredoxin NADP+ reductase; G6P, glucose 6-phosphate; HydA, [FeFe] hydrogenase; HydEF/G, hydrogenase maturation factors; IdhA, lactate dehydrogenase; IlvD, dihydroxy-acid dehydratase; IlvC, acetohydroxy acid isomeroreductase; PDC, pyruvate decarboxylase; PEP, phosphoenolpyruvate.

Single gene targeted approaches

In vitro route (intracellular lipase)

Systemic approaches, metabolic engineering

Current approaches in biofuels production

- **Designing photosynthetic microorganisms for production** of photobiological solar fuels
- Microbial fuel cells (electrobiofuels)
- Technical cultures of engineered (and natural) strains of microorganisms
- **Systems metabolic engineering of bacteria and yeast,** creation of cell factories for high-value desired chemicals

Biofuels produced by engineered microbes

- **Example 1 Lipids and fatty acids**
- Fatty alcohols
- **Ethanol, isopropanol**
- Butanol, methylbutanol
- Hexanol, octanol
- Alkanes, alkenes
- Isoprenoids

Current Opinion in Biotechnology

Biodiesel in engineered *E. coli*

Biodiesel from *Y. lipolytica*

Biodiesel in E. coli

Synthesis of customized petroleum-replica fuel molecules by targeted modification of free fatty acid pools in Escherichia coli

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Stress engineering

- **Biofuels producing bacteria may suffer from presence of** the target compound
- **Stress tolerance engineering is important**
	- Targeted metabolic engineering
	- Stress-induced mutagenesis

Reading

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Biotechnology Advances 25 (2007) 464 – 482

www.elsevier.com/locate/biotechady

Research review paper

A state of the art review on microbial fuel cells: A promising technology for was tewater treatment and bioenergy

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