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Heterologous Production and Characterization of *Arthrobacter globiformis* T6 Isomalto-dextranase

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Efficient production of an isomalto-dextranase from *Arthrobacter globiformis* T6 has been achieved in *Escherichia coli*. The combination of an expression vector lacking the region for the signal peptide, cultivation at 25°C, and optimization of *E. coli* cells allows us to produce the isomalto-dextranase at more than 1000 times the amount under the original conditions, which then enables us to characterize the enzyme in detail. The primary structure of the isomalto-dextranase from *A. globiformis* T6 has a distant similarity with enzymes belonging to glycosyl hydrolase family 27, which comprises mainly α -galactosidases and α -*N*-acetylgalactosaminidases. Therefore, the reaction of the isomalto-dextranase for melibiose, a substrate for α -galactosidases, has also been investigated. The isomalto-dextranase did not hydrolyze melibiose or *p*-nitrophenyl α -D-galactoside. The K_i values for isomaltose and maltose were 2.3 and 7.8 mM, respectively, while melibiose scarcely inhibited the activity of the isomalto-dextranase. Moreover, melibiose was a poor acceptor for the transglycosylation with dextran, and the maximum accumulation of the transglycosylation product was 12-fold less than that for isomaltose. The findings indicated here that the isomalto-dextranase is highly specific for the glucosyl moiety in both hydrolysis and transglycosylation.

Key words: isomalto-dextranase, α -galactosidase, glycosyl hydrolase family 27, signal peptide

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