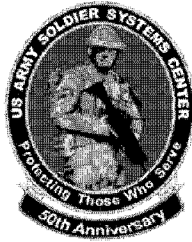


TECHNICAL REPORT
NATICK/TR-05/008



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**SENSITIVITY OF SPORES OF EIGHT
BACILLUS CEREUS STRAINS TO
PRESSURE-INDUCED GERMINATION
BY MODERATE HYDROSTATIC
PRESSURE, TIME AND TEMPERATURE**

by
Norasak Kalchayanand*
Bibek Ray*
C.P. Dunne
and
Anthony Sikes

***University of Wyoming
Laramie, WY 82071**

March 2005

Final Report
July 2002 – June 2003

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**U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command
Natick Soldier Center
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 02-03-2005		2. REPORT TYPE Final		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) July 2002 - June 2003	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE SENSITIVITY OF SPORES OF EIGHT <i>BACILLUS CEREUS</i> STRAINS TO PRESSURE-INDUCED GERMINATION BY MODERATE HYDROSTATIC PRESSURE, TIME AND TEMPERATURE				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER DAAN02-98-C-4010	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) *Norasak Kalchayanand, *Bibek Ray, **C.P. Dunne and **Anthony Sikes					
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) *Food Microbiology Laboratory Department of Animal Science University of Wyoming Laramie, WY 82071				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command Natick Soldier Center ATTN: AMSRD-NSC-CF-P Natick, MA 01760-5018				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) NATICK/TR-05/008	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release: distribution is unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT The spores of eight <i>Bacillus cereus</i> strains were pressurized at 138 to 483 MPa for 5 to 20 min at 25° to 70°C in order to determine the sensitive and the resistant strains to pressure-induced germination. The most sensitive strain was <i>B. cereus</i> QMB 476, while the most resistant strain was <i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778. Pressurization at 25°C induced spores to germinate ranged from 2.6 to 5.0 log cycles. An addition of 1.3 to 1.9 log cycle increased in pressure-induced germination of <i>B. cereus</i> , when spores were pressurized at 50°C. Pressurization at 483 MPa for 20 min at 70°C, spores of <i>B. cereus</i> QMB 476 were inactivate from 11.9 to 4.0 log cycles (7.9 log reductions) and spores of <i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778 were killed from 9.2 to 3.1 log cycles, 6.1 log reductions. The survivors were destroyed, when spores were pressurized in the presence of bacteriocin-based preservatives containing 100 µg/ml of lysozyme and 500 µg/ml of Na-EDTA.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS BACILLUS CEREUS HYDROSTATIC PRESSURE TEMPERATURE PACKAGING GERMINATION PATHOGENIC MICROORGANISMS BACTERIA FOOD DETERIORATION SENSITIVITY FOOD PROCESSING BACILLUS BACTERIOCINS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			C.P. Dunne/A. Sikes
UU	UU	UU	SAR	19	19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (Include area code) (508) 233-5514/233-4383

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PREFACE

This study was conducted from July 2002 through June 2003 by Mssrs. Norasak Kalchayanand and Bibek Ray, University of Wyoming, under supervision of Mssrs. Anthony Sikes and Patrick Dunne, U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center, Natick, MA 01760. The work was funded under the project titled “Pressure Inactivation Parameters of Foodborne Pathogenic *Bacillus cereus* Spores,” Contract number DAAN02-98-C-4010.

Mssrs. Kalchayanand’s and Ray’s research was designed to ascertain answers to the following questions: (1) are spores of different strains of *B. cereus* sensitive to hydrostatic pressure induction to germination; (2) will a combination of moderate pressure and temperature inactivate a high level of spores of *B. cereus*, and since both *B. cereus* and *Bacillus anthracis* share many common physiological characteristics, will they, *B. anthracis*, exhibit a similar responds to hydrostatic pressure-induced germination, and (3) does hydrostatic pressure in combination with bacteriocin-based preservatives enhance viability loss of *B. cereus* spores?

SENSITIVITY OF SPORES OF EIGHT *BACILLUS CEREUS* STRAINS TO PRESSURE-INDUCED GERMINATION BY MODERATE HYDROSTATIC PRESSURE, TIME AND TEMPERATURE

Introduction

Unlike vegetative cells, the inactivation of bacterial spores is still a major concern of the application of hydrostatic pressure for the preservation of foods. The mode of action of pressure on bacterial spores is not clear (Smelt, 1998). However, bacterial spores can be destroyed directly by pressure higher than 1000 MPa. A combination of very high pressure and high temperature was also used to destroy many spores of *Bacillus* and *Clostridium* species (Farkas and Hoover, 2000; Ray et al., 2001; Ray 2002). This drastic treatment has adversely affected the quality of food and has limited commercial application. However, bacterial spores are sensitive to pressures between 50 and 300 MPa (Sale et al., 1970; Wuytack et al., 1998). It has been observed for the spores of various *Bacillus* species that the inactivation was more efficient at moderate (200 to 500 MPa) rather than at higher (>500 MPa) pressures (Wuytack et al., 1998). It is generally agreed that at such pressures, spores can be induced to germinate followed by the death of the germinated spores under those pressures (Clouston and Wills, 1969; Gould and Sale, 1970; Sale et al., 1970; Sojka and Ludwig, 1994).

Bacillus cereus is ubiquitous in nature and its spores may be present normally at low levels in food (<10² cfu/g; Forsythe, 2000). *B. cereus* is recognized as a causative agent of food poisoning. Foods incriminated in the past outbreaks of *B. cereus* poisoning include cereal dishes containing corn and corn starch, potatoes, cold soups, sauces,

puddings, meats, cooked vegetables, ice cream and fresh and powdered milk (Doyle, 1988; Snyder and Poland, 1991). Very limited information on pressure induction and inactivation of *B. cereus* spores exists. The objectives of this study are to determine the sensitivity of pressure-induced germination among the spores of *B. cereus* strains to hydrostatic pressure, pressurization time and temperature, and to develop the pressurization parameters for the effective inactivation of *B. cereus* spores at a high level. In addition, as *B. cereus* and *B. anthracis* have many common physiological characteristics, these results may have important implications on the pressure-inactivation of *B. anthracis* spores, which has become a major safety concern.

Materials and Methods

Bacterial strains

Eight strains of *Bacillus cereus* spores were used in this study. Four strains were obtained from Anthony Sikes, US Army Research, Development and Engineering Command, Natick, MA, and four were from U. of Wyoming (UW) Food Microbiology culture collection (Table 1). Cultures were grown aerobically in nutrient broth with 500 units per ml of polymyxin B sulfate at 30°C for 48h. Each strain was streaked on antibiotic assay medium (AAMS; Cook and Brown, 1964) supplemented with 500 units/ml of polymyxin B sulfate and incubated at 30°C for 24 to 48h. A single colony of each strain was transferred to AAMS broth without antibiotic and incubated for 16 to 18h at 30°C. The cells were harvested by centrifugation at 8000xg for 10 min and followed with the API 50 CHB identification scheme (bioMérieux, Hazelwood, MO). The biochemical characteristics were confirmed with the computer database provided by bioMérieux (bioMérieux, Hazelwood, MO) and stock cultures were made and stored at -40°C.

Table 1. *Bacillus cereus* sources and description

Strain	Source	Description
<i>B. cereus</i> 16	US Army	Isolated from salmon steak; Nisin resistant at 250 ppm.
<i>B. cereus</i> 19	US Army	Isolated from salmon steak treated with allyl isothio-cyanate.
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB 476	US Army	From QM stock.
<i>B. cereus</i> SLR 779	UW; Fd Micro.	Isolated from tomato paste
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB 1565	US Army	From QM stock.
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 10876	ATCC	
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778	ATCC	
<i>B. cereus</i> 13103	UW; Fd Micro.	

Bacteriocin-producing *Pediococcus acidilactici* LB 42-923 and *Lactococcus lactis* ATCC 11454 (UW Food Microbiology culture collection) were grown in trypticase glucose yeast extract (TGE) at 37° and 30°C, respectively (Bhunja et al., 1988; Yang et al., 1992).

Preparation of *B. cereus* spores

All the cultures, except *B. cereus* ATCC 11778, were transferred to Kim-Goepfert (KG; Leininger, 1976) broth without egg yolk emulsion and polymyxin B sulfate and agitated at 3000 rpm for 72 h at 30°C. After 72 h of incubation, cultures were observed under phase contrast microscope for the presence of spores.

A large number of spores from *B. cereus* ATCC 11778 were successfully obtained on nutrient agar (Difco, Detroit, MI) supplemented with 50 mg/L of $\text{MnSO}_4 \cdot \text{H}_2\text{O}$ (Sigma, St. Louis, MO). All spores were harvested and washed six times with sterile deionized water by centrifugation at 8000xg for 10 min at 4°C. Spores were resuspended with sterile deionized water and stored at 4°C. The spore concentration was determined by heat-activation at 80°C for 10 min, serially diluted with 0.1% peptone solution and plated with AAM supplemented with 0.1% soluble starch and without antibiotic. Plates were incubated at 30°C for 48h before counting the colonies.

Preparation of antimicrobial compounds

The two bacteriocins, pediocin AcH and nisin A, were obtained from the producer strains *Pediococcus acidilactici* LB 42-932 and *Lactococcus lactis* ATCC 11454, respectively. For pediocin AcH production, *P. acidilactici* LB 42-923 was grown in TGE at 37°C for 16 to 18 h. *L. lactis* ATCC 11454 was grown in TGE using fermenter (Biostat M; B. Braun, Allentown, PA) at 30°C for 16 to 18 h at a constant pH of 5.8 for nisin A production. Both pediocin AcH and nisin A were partially purified by the adsorption and desorption methods as described by Yang et al., 1992. Both bacteriocins were freeze-dried, assayed for their potencies as activity unit (AU)/g of dried materials and stored at -40°C according to Bhunia et al., 1988, Biswas et al., 1991 and Young et al., 1992. Before using, the dried materials were dissolved in sterile deionized water, sterilized by membrane filtration (0.22 µm; Pall Gelman, Ann Arbor, MI) and assayed for AU/ml.

The bacteriocin-based preservatives (BP and BP_Y) were prepared using the bacteriocin solutions as follows: BP was prepared by mixing pediocin and nisin of equal AU/ml at 3:7 ratio; BP_Y was prepared by using BP supplemented with 100 µg/ml of lysozyme (Sigma, St. Louis, MO) and 500 µg/ml of Na-EDTA (Sigma, St. Louis, MO). Both BP and BP_Y were used at either 500 or 3,000 AU/ml final concentration.

Hydrostatic pressurization

The vials containing spore suspension with or without biopreservative based antimicrobial compounds were subjected to an initial heat treatment either at 27.5°, 53.5°, 63.5° or 73.5°C for 5 min to ensure that the temperature at the middle of vials did reach 25°, 50°, 60° or 70°C before placing into the preheated pressurization chamber (Engineered Pressure System, Wilmington, MA) containing a mixture of water and 5% soluble oil (Hydrolubric 2; Houghton International, Valley Forge, PA). Controls were not subjected to hydrostatic pressure treatment. The vials were placed inside the chamber and held for 2 min to equilibrate the temperature before pressurization from 138 to 483 MPa for 5, 10 or 20 min. The pressurized vials were cooled immediately in an ice-bath for 5 min and stored at 4°C for 24h before enumeration for colony forming unit (CFU).

Enumeration of total and pressure-induced spores

The total spore concentrations were determined by plating following heat-activation at 80°C for 10 min. The heat killed the vegetative cells present in the preparation.

The heat-activated spore suspension of each vial was serially diluted in 0.1% peptone solution and was plated in duplicate. AAMS with or without bio-preservative-based antimicrobial compounds was used to enumerate. The plates were incubated aerobically at 30°C for 48h and CFU from a dilution that gave CFU between 25 to 250 colonies per plate were counted.

To determine germinated spores in a population, the pressurized spore suspensions were given a heat treatment (80°C for 10 min) to destroy the pressure-induced germinated spores and plated as described above to enumerate the uninduced post-pressurized spores. The differences in counts between the total spore concentrations and uninduced post-pressurized spores gave the numbers of pressured-induced spores.

Statistical analysis

A randomized complete block design of the pooled data was used with growth of spores measured as \log_{10} CFU/ml for analyses of variance (ANOVA). Differences in means were determined by using Duncan's Multiple Range Test methods (SAS, 1985).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Identification of *B. cereus* strains

All tested strains were confirmed with the computer database provided by bioMérieux (bioMérieux, Hazelwood, MO), as well as biochemical characteristics from Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology (Sneath, P.H.A. et al., 1986) to be *B. cereus*. All strains produced acid from glucose, maltose, trehalose and hydrolyzed esculine compared to the biochemical reactions of this organism in Bergey's Manual (Table 2). Ribose and fructose were used as a carbon source among the tested strains. *B. cereus* 19, ATCC 11778 and 13103 did not produce acid from glycerol. *B. cereus* QMB476, QMB1565, ATCC 10876 and 13103 did not use saccharose as a carbon source. *B. cereus* SLR 779 isolated from tomato paste and *B. cereus* 13103 did not produce acid from salicine. Under phase contrast microscope, all strains showed ellipsoidal spores at the middle of the cells.

Pressure-induced germination of *B. cereus* strains by the combined effect of pressure, time and temperature.

The spore suspensions of the eight strains of *B. cereus* were exposed to different combinations of pressure ranging between 138 and 483 MPa for 5 to 20 min at 25° or 50°C. Pressurization at 138 MPa for 20 min at 50°C resulted in pressure-induced germination of spores of *B. cereus* 16, QMB 476 and QMB 1565. The pressure-induced germination results at 20° and 50°C are given in Table 3 and 4, respectively. Pressure-induced germination ranged from 1.65 to 6.08 log cycles, when spores were pressurized at 25°C for 5 to 20 min.

Increasing the pressure from 138 to 483 MPa at 25°C did not always increase the number of pressure-induced spores. Gould and Sale (1970) and Wuytack et al. (1998) also reported this phenomenon. In this study, a number of pressure-induced spores of *B. cereus* QMB476, QMB1565 and ATCC 10876 increased with increasing pressure from 138 to 483 MPa. Increasing time of pressurization from 5 to 20 min resulted in increasing the number of pressure-induced spores of all tested strains at each level of pressure. The number of pressure-induced spores of *B. cereus* T increased, when those spores were pressurized at 51 MPa for 5 to 30 min as reported by Gould and Sale (1970). When spores were pressurized at 50°C for 5 to 20 min, the number of pressure-induced germinated spores ranged from 2.88 to 7.59 log cycles. It was also observed that an additional 1.23 to 1.51 log cycle increase occurred when spores were pressurized at 50°C. Further, the number of pressure-induced spores increased with increasing pressure of 138 to 483 MPa. This suggested that pressure-induced germination of spores of *B. cereus* was temperature dependent. Gould and Sale (1970) found that the amount of pressure-induced spores of *B. coagulans*, *B. subtilis* and *B. cereus* T were higher, when those spores were pressurized at 50° to 60°C. Similar to pressurization at 25°C, the number of pressure-induced spores increased with increasing pressurization time from 5 to 20 min. In all tested strains, pressurization at 50°C had a higher induction effect than at 25°C. In this study, the optimum conditions for pressure-induction of spores of *B. cereus* were not clear. Differences in germination level of *Bacillus* spores as a function of pressure and temperature have been reported by other investigators (Gould and Sale, 1970; Gould, 1973; Nakayama et al., 1996; Wuytack et al., 1998; Okazaki et al., 2000; Farkas and Hoover, 2000).

Table 2. Biochemical characteristics of *B. cereus* strains relative to *B. cereus* from Bergey's Manual

Strain	Characteristics ^b											Spores shape/spore position				
	Gly	Rib	Glu	Fruc	Esc	Sal	Malt	Sacc	Treh							
<i>B. cereus</i> ^a	+		+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central	
<i>B. cereus</i> 16	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> 19	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB476	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> SLR 779	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB1565	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 10876	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central
<i>B. cereus</i> 13103	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	Ellipsoidal/Central

^a Strain reported from Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology Vol. 2, 1986.

^b Gly, glycerol; Rib, ribose; Glu, glucose; Fruc, fructose; Esc, esculine; Sal, salicine; Malt, maltose; Sacc, saccharose; and Treh, trehalose

Table 3. Pressure-induced spores of *B. cereus* strains following pressurization at 25°C.

Strain #	Time (min)	log ₁₀ induction following pressurization at (MPa)						
		0	138	207	276	345	414	483
16	5	5.54	2.89	2.92	2.36	2.19	2.08	2.15
	10		2.94	2.89	2.30	2.39	2.56	2.52
	20		3.15	2.61	3.00	2.68	2.42	2.56
19	5	7.60	3.91	4.12	3.18	3.34	3.54	3.31
	10		4.00	4.06	3.31	4.00	4.06	4.20
	20		4.68	4.62	4.73	5.01	4.54	4.40
476	5	6.08	4.21	4.43	4.38	4.00	4.54	4.69
	10		4.68	4.93	4.69	4.60	4.60	4.93
	20		5.58	5.93	5.63	6.08	6.08	6.08
779	5	7.19	3.39	3.42	3.91	3.84	2.90	2.80
	10		4.00	4.04	3.98	3.93	3.76	3.89
	20		5.01	5.17	6.04	5.65	5.02	5.19
1565	5	6.30	1.65	1.65	2.49	2.46	2.38	2.38
	10		2.30	2.40	3.70	3.35	3.18	3.18
	20		3.85	5.00	4.91	4.65	4.02	4.21
10876	5	6.84	2.56	2.69	2.66	3.66	3.78	4.00
	10		2.94	3.71	3.72	3.80	3.94	4.14
	20		3.19	3.74	3.86	3.86	4.00	4.15
11778	5	6.30	2.56	2.65	2.61	2.65	2.49	2.28
	10		2.76	2.76	2.70	2.55	2.70	2.52
	20		2.82	3.14	2.93	3.12	3.04	2.98
13103	5	6.90	3.80	3.21	3.06	2.64	2.66	2.21
	10		4.30	4.30	3.62	3.63	3.63	3.63
	20		4.47	4.98	4.86	4.77	4.86	5.00

Table 4. Pressure-induced of spores of *B. cereus* strains following pressurization at 50°C.

Strain #	Time (min)	log ₁₀ induction following pressurization at (MPa)						
		0	138	207	276	345	414	483
16	5	5.84	3.71	3.82	4.36	4.36	4.54	4.54
	10		4.69	4.99	5.19	4.69	4.84	4.84
	20		5.84	5.84	5.84	5.84	5.84	5.84
19	5	6.92	4.22	4.27	4.86	5.27	4.90	4.97
	10		4.59	4.56	5.77	5.62	5.22	5.38
	20		5.44	5.92	6.47	6.77	6.92	6.92
476	5	6.54	5.89	5.74	5.69	6.54	6.54	6.39
	10		6.54	6.54	6.39	6.54	6.39	6.54
	20		6.54	6.54	6.54	6.54	6.54	6.54
779	5	6.16	3.77	4.01	4.36	4.46	4.31	4.21
	10		5.31	5.26	5.46	5.77	6.16	6.01
	20		6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16	6.16
1565	5	6.40	3.86	4.01	4.56	4.45	4.36	4.70
	10		4.43	5.55	5.45	5.10	5.40	5.70
	20		5.70	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.40	6.40
10876	5	6.72	2.88	2.98	3.12	4.18	4.36	4.33
	10		4.07	4.07	4.24	4.24	4.24	4.40
	20		4.70	4.72	5.33	5.27	6.72	6.72
11778	5	6.00	3.26	3.52	3.70	3.92	4.35	3.46
	10		3.46	3.98	4.40	4.85	4.70	4.46
	20		5.00	5.15	6.00	6.00	6.00	5.30
13103	5	7.59	4.72	5.26	5.70	5.67	5.75	7.09
	10		4.94	6.20	6.20	6.74	6.59	7.59
	20		6.44	6.59	6.44	7.05	6.89	7.59

Sensitivities and resistances of spores of *B. cereus* strains to pressure-induced germination

Pressurization at 25° or 50°C was used to select the sensitive or resistant strains. From the results in Table 1 and 2, the data were pooled for each strain from 5 to 20 min of pressurization and for each pressure. The sensitive and resistant strains were determined through the main effect of pressure to induce spores to germinate at 25° and 50°C, respectively.

The results are presented in Table 5. Among 8 strains of *B. cereus*, hydrostatic pressure-induced spore germination ranged from 2.6 to 5.0 and from 4.5 to 6.3 log cycles, when spores were pressurized at 25° and 50°C, respectively. At 25°C, the *B. cereus* QMB 476 was the most sensitive strain which had the highest log induction among the tested strains ($P \leq 0.05$). At 50°C, both strains of *B. cereus* ATCC 10876 and 11778 had the lowest log induction among the tested strains ($P \leq 0.05$). Therefore, the strains ATCC 10876 and 11778 were pressurized at 138 to 483 MPa for 5 to 20 min at 60° or 70°C to determine which strain was the most resistant to pressure induction. Pressurization at 60°C did not differentiate pressure-induced resistance between *B. cereus* ATCC 10876 and *B. cereus* ATCC 11778 (Table 6). At 70°C, however, the *B. cereus* ATCC 11778 demonstrated a significantly ($P \leq 0.05$) lower log induction number than strain ATCC 10876 and was the most resistant to pressure-induced germination among all of the tested *B. cereus* strains.

Table 5. Influence of hydrostatic pressure on induction to germination of *Bacillus* spores.

Bacteria strain	log ₁₀ induction ^a after pressurized at	
	25°C	50°C
<i>B. cereus</i> 16	2.6 ^b	5.0 ^{bc}
<i>B. cereus</i> 19	4.0 ^c	5.4 ^c
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB 476	5.0 ^d	6.2 ^d
<i>B. cereus</i> SLR 779	4.2 ^c	5.3 ^c
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB 1565	3.2 ^e	5.3 ^c
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 10876	3.6 ^f	4.5 ^b
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778	2.7 ^b	4.5 ^b
<i>B. cereus</i> 13103	3.9 ^{cf}	6.3 ^d

^a Pooled data of all pressures and times of pressurization at each temperature

^{b-f} Means in the same column bearing a common letter do not differ significantly at P≤0.05

Table 6. Pressure induced germination of *B. cereus* spores at 60° and 70°C

Bacterial strain	Temp (°C)	log ₁₀ induction ^a following pressurization at (MPa)					Average log ₁₀ induction	
		138	207	276	345	414		483
<i>B. cereus</i> 10876	60	6.15	6.40	6.76	7.13	7.10	7.24	6.80 ^b
<i>B. cereus</i> 11778	60	5.89	6.21	6.48	6.78	6.80	6.89	6.51 ^b
<i>B. cereus</i> 10876	70	6.34	6.71	7.08	7.30	7.33	7.50	7.04 ^c
<i>B. cereus</i> 11778	70	5.60	5.84	6.20	6.58	6.71	6.72	6.28 ^d

^a Pooled data of pressurization times of 5, 10 and 20 min

^{b-d} Means in the same pressurization temperature bearing a common letter do not differ significantly at P≤0.05

Viability loss by pressurization in the presence of bacteriocin-based antimicrobial compounds

The selected strains, one sensitive and one resistant to pressure-induction, were used in this study. The results are presented in Table 7. With pressurization alone, there were some survivors even the most sensitive strain (*B. cereus* QMB 476). Pressurization at 483 MPa at 70°C reduced the number of spores of *B. cereus* QMB 476 from 11.9 to 4.0 log cycles (7.9 log reductions) in 20 min. Similarly, *B. cereus* ATCC 11778 was reduced 6.1 log (from 9.2 to 3.1) in 20 min at the same pressure and temperature. To estimate the beneficial effect of adding bacteriocin-based preservatives, the spore suspensions with BP or BP_Y (3,000 AU/ml) were pressurized and enumerated for viable spores in the AAM agar with or without antimicrobial compounds (500 AU/ml). Pressurization of each spore suspension in the presence of BP did not reduce the number of survivors. This indicates that pressure-induced germinated spores were not sensitive to BP. However, by plating the pressurized spore suspension in the medium containing antimicrobial compounds, the number of survivors was reduced from 4.0 log to 2.7 log cycles in *B. cereus* QMB 476. *B. cereus* ATCC 11778 probably was not sensitive to BP due to only 0.1 log cycle difference in both media. The viability loss increased when BP_Y was include during pressurization. There were no survivors found from either strain when pressurized in the presence of BP_Y or enumerated with medium containing BP_Y. This shows that BP_Y was more effective than BP in destroying the outgrowth of pressure-induced spores of *B. cereus*. The combination of lysozyme and EDTA resulted in a unique synergistic action with pressure to inactivate spores of *B. cereus*.

Table 7. Survivors of the spores of *B. cereus* following pressurization at 483 MPa at 70°C for 20 min in the absence or presence of bacteriocin-based antimicrobial compounds.

Bacterial strain	Treatments ^a and log ₁₀ CFU/ml					
	Ctrl	HP	HP+BP		HP+BP _Y	
			Agar- ^b	Agar+ ^c	Agar- ^b	Agar+ ^c
<i>B. cereus</i> QMB 476	11.9	4.0	4.0	2.7	ND ^d	ND
<i>B. cereus</i> ATCC 11778	9.2	3.1	3.1	3.0	ND	ND

^a Ctrl: unpressurized control; HP: pressurized, heat treated at 80°C for 0 min and enumerated for CFU/ml; HP+BP: pressurized in the presence of 3,000 AU/ml of bacteriocin-based preservative; HP+BP_Y: pressurized in the presence of 3,000 AU/ml of BP supplemented with 100 µg/ml of lysozyme and 500 µg/ml of Na-EDTA.

^b Pressurized spore suspensions in the presence of one of the bacteriocin-based preservatives were heated and enumerated.

^c Pressurized spore suspensions from “b” were plated in the AAM-agar containing either BP or BP_Y (500 AU/ml).

^d ND: no CFU was detected by plating 2 ml of undiluted spore suspension.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Variation in sensitivity to pressure-induced germination of spores was found among the strains of *B. cereus*. The sensitivity to pressure-induction was depended on magnitude of pressure, pressurization time, temperature and also strains within that species.
2. The most sensitive and resistant strains among the 8 strains tested were *B. cereus* strain QMB 476 and strain ATCC 11778, respectively.
3. There were no specific conditions necessary for pressure-induced germination of spores of *B. cereus*, when using a medium range hydrostatic pressure (>100 MPa to 500 MPa). However, studies have showed that pressure-induced germination is both time and temperature dependent. It seems that spores of *B. cereus* were more sensitive to pressure-induced germination when spores were pressurized for a longer time and at a higher temperatures.
4. Bacteriocin-based preservatives, BP_Y, can be used to control *B. cereus* spores during pressurization or post-pressurization.

This document reports research undertaken at the U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command, Soldier Systems Center, Natick, MA, and has been assigned No. NATICK/TR-05/008 in a series of reports approved for publication.

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