

ABSTRACTS

ketoglutaric acid by *Ps. fluorescens*. As for *Serratia marsecens*, similar results were obtained by Asai and Aida *et al.* On the contrary, it was demonstrated by us, that 2-ketogluconic acid could not be an intermediate product of α -ketoglutaric acid with *Escherichia coli*, since 2-ketogluconic acid was never detected at any stage of fermentation. It was also found by us that a remarkable amount of α -ketoglutaric acid was already produced in the early stage of fermentation (within 14 hours' culture) by some species of *coli-aerogenes* types.

Phosphoric acid ester of vitamin B₁ has already been pointed out to be the principal component of the coenzyme of the oxidizing systems of pyruvic and α -ketoglutaric acids by Gunsalus *et al.* Therefore, they concluded that vitamin B₁ would reveal such a noticeable effect on the decomposition of α -ketoglutaric acid as it has been already ascertained on the decomposition of pyruvic acid. In our experiments with the bacteria of *coli-aerogenes* types, vitamin B₁ was found to diminish the formation of pyruvic acid, however no effect of vitamin B₁ was observed on the decomposition of α -ketoglutaric acid throughout the fermentation.

Table 1. The production of α -ketoglutaric acid.

Exp. No.	Strain No.	Time of incubation (hrs.)	Initial conc. of glucose (%)	Glucose consumed (g.)	α -Ketoglutaric acid produced (% on consumed glucose)
1	2C	84	5.0	4.94	42.9
2	2C	46	5.0	4.50	42.3
3	B24	60	5.0	4.70	43.6
4	B25	60	6.0	5.58	39.8
5	B24	60	5.0	4.70	44.7
6	B24	120	8.0	7.61	48.8
7	B24	120	8.0	6.70	45.0
8	B25	120	8.0	6.48	51.5
9	2C	140	9.0	8.33	51.0
10	2C	140	9.0	8.83	45.6
11	2C	140	9.0	7.01	49.0
12	5E	115	9.0	9.00	19.5
13	6E	115	9.0	8.88	32.4
14	7E	115	9.0	9.00	33.2
15	8E	115	9.0	8.73	34.4
16	9E	115	9.0	9.00	41.8

Microbiological Studies of *Coli-aerogenes* Bacteria. (III)

Oxidations of Glucose and Pyruvic Acid

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The oxidative degradation of glucose by *coli-aerogenes* bacteria was investigated: a remarkable yield (more than 0.5 mole per one mole of glucose) of α -ketoglutaric acid was obtained with suspensions of washed cells of the bacteria grown aerobically on glucose medium, and pyruvic acid fermentation was revealed in the presence of arsenic compounds not only with growing culture but also with the washed cells. Moreover, pyruvic acid was found to be a potent precursor of α -ketoglutaric acid.

Microbiological Studies of *Coli-aerogenes* Bacteria. (IV)

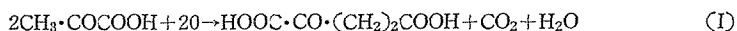
Production of α -Ketoglutaric Acid

Hideo KATAGIRI and Tatsurokuro TOCHIKURA

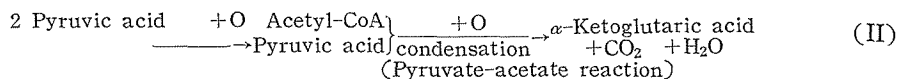
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The formation of α -ketoglutaric acid from pyruvic acid may be represented in the following equation in which the synthesis of the carbon chain would necessarily be involved.



Under the authors' experimental conditions, α -ketoglutaric acid was obtained in such a good yield as 0.5-0.7 mole from two moles of pyruvic acid, that is, the yield amounted to 50-70% of pyruvic acid used. Furthermore the experimental results with pyruvic acid, not containing high energy phosphate-bond ($\sim$ Ph) in the molecule, will point out the propriety of the assumption that a major pathway of synthesizing α -ketoglutaric acid would not involve carbon dioxide fixation (oxaloacetic acid formation from pyruvate). On the other hand, phosphoenol pyruvic acid is known to be most effective upon carbon dioxide fixation in both animal and plant tissues. As a further explanation for reaction (I), the following pathway would be possible:



The transformation of lactic acid into α -ketoglutaric acid was confined to proceed *via* pyruvic acid, based on the results that a minute trace of pyruvic acid could be detected during the oxidation of lactic acid.

From the ecological point of view, it is interesting to note that lactic acid, which is accumulated as the major product without being metabolized in the anaerobic fermentation by the bacteria of *coli-aerogenes*, is available as a source of carbon and moreover is converted in aerobic conditions into α -ketoglutaric acid, which is the precursor of glutamic acid, therefore the starting substance for the syntheses of various amino acids.