



**9th International Congress of the
Serbian Society of Mechanics
July 5-7, 2023, Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia**

Book of Proceedings

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DEVELOPMENT AND MOULD TECHNOLOGY FOR TESTING OF BIOCOMPOSITE STRUCTURES (APPLICATION FOR THERMOINSULATED BIO PLATES)

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Abstract

Biocomposite materials are a combination of two or more different biomaterials at the macroscopic level, with competitive mechanical and insulation properties, relatively stable when exposed to high temperatures and tailorable. In this paper, materials are with a vegetative part of fungi (mycelium-mesh structure of hyphae) which are increasingly used to create biocomposites with unique processing technology. The vegetative part of a fungus called mycelium, can serve as a natural binder for products made of biocomposite and acts like a self-assembling adhesive by digesting and adhering to the surface of specific organic matter. This paper presents the development of mould technology to set the biocomposite structure and test its mechanical characteristics. The primary purpose of the mould is to bring the loose natural material into a solid preparation following the standards ASTM D7250 and ASTM D1037, which include testing the technologically prepared and hardened sample for tensile and pressure. Development and moulding of biocomposite are the technological processes of drying after sowing mycelium so a variant of the mould with a perforated upper part was used to harden the samples thoroughly.

Keywords: mycellium biocomposite, mould, 3D printing, testing, thermoinsulation.

1. Introduction

With global carbon emissions of 39% [1], the building industry has a large responsibility to constantly propose new and improved low-carbon solutions. It takes over a million years to decompose standard synthetic thermal insulation materials. The general characteristic of organic materials is that they have a lower coefficient of thermal conductivity and a higher heat capacity compared to most synthetic materials. The thermal conductivity of such materials varies significantly, greatly depending on different characteristics: degree of porosity, the temperature of the material, the moisture content, the direction of fiber propagation, which affects the direction of the temperature gradient. Mycelium-based polymers hold special potential as thermal insulation foams due to their low thermal conductivity and inherent fire safety features. Research that has been done on thermal conductivities refers that mycelium composites based on hemp fibers or wheat straw have low thermal conductivities (0,04 W/(mK)) and can compete with polystyrene (0.03-0.04 W/(mK)) and polyurethane foam (0.006-0.18 W/(mK)) [2].

2. Development and manufacturing of a mould

Manufacturing of biocomposite structure usually proposes the next steps: 1) preparation of mould according to the type of testing and appropriate standards; 2) binding of plies with natural glue in order to prevent the growth of mycelium; 3) forming, sterilization and hardening plies and structure; 4) filling of mould by mycelium biomaterial; 5) drying and prevention growth of mycelium fibres; 6) infusion of natural resin to improve mechanical characteristics [3]. For the first phase - tensile testing, 10 moulds were manufactured for the production of specimens according to standard D1037. The mould was first created and developed in CATIA and by appropriate software printed in the 3D printer (additive technology).

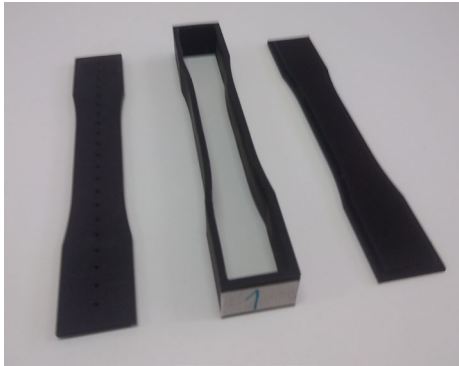


Fig 1. Parts of mould



Fig 2. Moulds for production of testing specimen

3. Conclusion

Moulds for the production of biocomposite mycelium structures (for tensile and pressure testing) were developed, simulated and manufactured. The next phase involves experimental testing and analysis of drying and hardened biocomposite specimens according to appropriate standards and determination of mechanical characteristics.

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