



2nd CIRCUL-A-BILITY CONFERENCE

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



Ljubljana, 12-14 September 2022

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COST Action 191249 Re-Thinking Packaging for Circular & Sustainable Food
Supply Chains of the Future

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CHARACTERISATION OF BLEND FILMS BASED ON MICROBIAL POLYSACCHARIDE LEVAN AND GELATIN

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Food packaging ensures safety and hygiene, while reducing food waste, therefore it is an essential component of the food supply chain. A sustainable and biodegradable alternative to conventional food packaging is edible packaging which contributes to the reducing waste and the economic efficiency of packaging materials [1]. The numerous biopolymeric materials could be used as source such as polysaccharides (starch, cellulose, chitosan) and proteins (gelatin, soy protein, whey). Exopolysaccharides (EPS) are fermentation-based biopolymers, secreted outside the cell wall and synthesized by various microbial species including bacteria, fungi and blue-green algae [2]. Microbial levan is fructose-based EPS and convenient due to its biocompatibility, renewability, high molecular weight, low viscous nature, antioxidant and prebiotic effects [3].

*Levan used in this work was produced by the *B. licheniformis* NS032 strain [4] and its hydrophobic derivatives were obtained using octenyl succinic anhydride (OSA). Degree of substitution (DS) for modified levans were 0.025 and 0.032 for LH22 and LH26 respectively. Three different film compositions were prepared: levan/LH22/LH26 with gelatin in proportions 1:1. Films were prepared by casting technique and evaporated at room temperature. Morphology of the obtained films were studied by AFM (Atomic force microscopy), AutoProbe CP-Research SPM (TM Microscopes-Bruker) and mechanical properties were examined by Shimadzu EZ-LX tensile tester.*

The samples had thickness of 150 μm . Based on morphological measurements, it can be concluded that use of levan derivatives change roughness of the

levan/gelatin blend film. The best mechanical properties (tensile strength and elongation at break) were obtained with pure levan. Obtained films are composed from edible and biodegradable components and therefore are potentially applicable in food industry. Future investigation will be focused on optimization of levan/gelatin proportion and more extensive structural and mechanical properties of obtained films.

Keywords: *edible packaging, exopolysaccharides, levan, gelatin*

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