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ACETYL-CoA CARBOXYLASE IN THE PHOTOSYNTHETIC

TISSUE OF MAIZE

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirement for the degree of Master of Science
in Biochemistry at
MASSEY UNIVERSITY

SHANE McARTNEY RUTHERFURD

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was, a). to examine further, aspects of the role of acetyl-CoA carboxylase in the regulation of fatty acid synthesis in the provision of acyl lipid for plastid development, and b). to purify acetyl-CoA carboxylase from maize leaves using the affinity methods which have been used successfully to purify the enzyme from animal tissues.

In a constant weight of tissue, carboxylase activity decreased 7.6-fold over the period of 4 to 12 days after sowing, while total acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity increased 9-fold in maize seedlings over the period of 4 to 8 days with no further increase up to day 12. Protein levels decreased 3-fold over the growth period examined, while specific activity was constant at 27.2 to 28.3nmol/min/mg of protein between 4 and 6 days, before increasing to a maximum of 33.2nmol/min/mg of protein at day 7, then decreasing to one third of the maximum value on day 12. Chlorophyll levels in a constant weight of tissue increased 260-fold over the period of 4 to 11 days.

The changes in the level of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity paralleled changes in fatty acid levels in tissue along the length of the 9-day-old maize leaf. The levels of both biochemical parameters increased in the region from the leaf

base to 15mm along the leaf. After which they both decreased to a minimum at 25-30mm along the leaf before increasing to a maximum at 60mm along the leaf, and finally decreasing towards the leaf tip.

A 5-fold increase in acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity was observed from the least favourable chloroplast stromal concentrations of ATP, ADP, Mg^{2+} and H^+ in the dark, to the most favourable concentrations of these metabolites present in the chloroplast stroma during light periods.

These findings are consistent with, 1). a role for acetyl-CoA carboxylase in the regulation of fatty acid synthesis in maize photosynthetic tissue and, 2). control of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity via light-dependent changes in the pH and concentrations of ATP, ADP and Mg^{2+} found in the stroma of chloroplasts.

Several attempts were made to purify acetyl-CoA carboxylase using avidin-affinity chromatography. However, after the initial, apparently successful attempt, active enzyme could not be recovered from the avidin-affinity column upon elution with biotin. Changes were made to several chromatographic conditions, and although ionic strength in the range of 0.1 to 1.0M KCl, did not affect the elution of active acetyl-CoA carboxylase from the column; lowering the column flow rates from 1.5ml/hr/ml of gel to 0.15-0.3ml/hr/ml of gel did appear to enhance the binding of the enzyme to the column. Using this flow rate, a 62 000 dalton protein and a 54 500 dalton protein were eluted in a fraction found to contain biotin-containing

proteins. Since it is feasible that the 62 000 dalton is biotin-containing and since this protein has a similar molecular weight to 60 000-62 000 dalton biotin-containing subunit of maize leaf acetyl-CoA carboxylase, the potential for purifying acetyl-CoA carboxylase from maize leaves using avidin-affinity chromatography seems to exist. However, further investigation is necessary in order to facilitate the recovery of active carboxylase from the avidin-affinity column.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	acetyl-CoA carboxylase
ADP	adenosine 5'-diphosphate
AMP	adenosine 5'-monophosphate
ATP	adenosine 5'-triphosphate
BCCP	biotin carboxyl-carrier protein
BSA	bovine serum albumin
CoA	coenzyme A
DGDG	digalactosyl diglyceride
DMCS	dimethyl dichlorosilane
DTT	dithiothreitol
EDTA	ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid
Hepes	N-2-hydroxyethylpiperazine-N'-2-ethanesulphonic acid
Mes	2[N-morpholino] ethane sulphonic acid
MGDG	monogalactosyl diglyceride
PBS	phosphate buffer-saline
PEG	polyethylene glycol
POPOP	1,4-bis[2(5-phenyloxazolyl)]benzene
ppGpp	guanosine 5'-diphosphate-3'-diphosphate
PPO	2,5-diphenyloxazole
pppGpp	guanosine 5'-triphosphate-3'-diphosphate
RNA	ribonucleic acid
Rubisco	ribulose 1,5-bisphosphate carboxylase oxygenase
SDS	sodium dodecyl sulphate
TEMED	N,N,N',N'-tetramethylethylenediamine
Tricine	N-tris[hydroxymethyl]-methyl glycine
Tris	tris (hydroxymethyl) aminomethane
Tween 20	polyoxyethylene sorbitan monolaurate

1.4	Proposed Mechanisms for Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Activity	11
1.5	Regulation of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	12
1.5.1	Regulation in <u>E.coli</u>	12
1.5.2	Regulation in Animals	14
1.5.2.1	Regulation by Covalent Modification	16
1.5.3	Regulation in Plants	18
1.5.3.1	Effect of Monovalent Cations on the Activity of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	20
1.5.3.2	Effect of Light on the Activity of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	20
1.6	Purification of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	22
1.6.1	Non-Affinity Methods	22
1.6.2	Avidin-Affinity Chromatography	24
1.6.2.1	Preparation of the Avidin- Affinity Chromatography Column	25
CHAPTER 2	MATERIALS	
2.1	Plant Materials	27
2.2	Reagents	28
CHAPTER 3	METHODS	
3.1	Analytical Methods	29
3.1.1	Determination of Protein Levels	29

3.1.2	Determination of the Levels and Composition of Fatty Acids in Maize Leaves	29
3.1.3	Determination of Chlorophyll Levels	30
3.1.4	Determination of Radioactivity	30
3.2	Preparation of Acetyl-CoA	31
3.3	Preparation of Avidin-Sepharose	31
3.3.1	Determination of the Exchangeable Biotin-Binding Capacity of Avidin- Sepharose	33
3.4	Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Assay	33
3.4.1	Assay of Rat Liver Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	33
3.4.2	Assay of Maize Leaf Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	34
3.5	Preparation of Maize Leaf Sections	35
3.6	Preparation of Cell-Free Extracts	35
3.7	Polyacrylamide Gel Electrophoresis	35
3.8	Transfer of Dissociated Proteins from Gels to Nitrocellulose Paper	38
3.9	Biotin-Specific Probing	39
3.9.1	Detection of Protein on Nitro- cellulose Paper	39
3.10	Purification of Rat Liver Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	40
3.11	Purification of Maize Leaf Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	41
3.12	Purification of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Using Avidin-Affinity Chromatography	42

CHAPTER 4	RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	
4.1	General Features of the Maize Leaf Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Assay	44
4.2	Stability of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase extracted from Maize Leaves	47
4.3	Levels of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase in Maize Seedlings of Different Ages	47
4.4	Biochemical Changes During Development of the Maize Leaf	52
4.4.1	Fatty Acid Content	53
4.4.2	Protein Levels	58
4.4.3	Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Activity	60
4.4.4	Chlorophyll Levels	65
4.5	Role of Light in the Regulation of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase	65
4.6	Distribution of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase in Maize Seedlings	70
4.7	Western Blotting Analysis of Biotin-Containing Proteins	73
4.7.1	Effect of ATP and MgCl ₂ on the Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase- ³⁵ SLR-Streptavidin Interaction	73
4.7.2	Effect of Probing Time on Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase- ³⁵ SLR-Streptavidin Interaction	78
4.7.3	Effect of Blotting Time on Protein Transfer from Polyacrylamide Gels to Nitrocellulose	79
4.8	Purification of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase from Maize Leaf Tissue	82

4.8.1	Effect of Polyethylene Glycol on Precipitation of Maize Leaf Acetyl- CoA Carboxylase	86
4.8.2	Effect of Ammonium Sulphate on the Precipitation of Maize Leaf Acetyl- CoA Carboxylase	88
4.9	Purification of Maize Leaf Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Using Avidin-Affinity Chromatography	91
4.9.1	Effect of Ionic Strength and Flow Rate on the Binding of Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase to the Avidin-Affinity Column	94
4.10	Purification of Rat Liver Acetyl-CoA Carboxylase Using Avidin-Affinity Chromatography	103
CHAPTER 5	GENERAL DISCUSSION	109
BIBLIOGRAPHY		116

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>		<u>Page</u>
1	Structure of monogalactosyl diglyceride (MGDG) and digalactosyl diglyceride (DGDG)	2
2	Alternative proposals for the provision of acetyl-CoA in mature spinach chloroplasts	5
3	Proposed kinetic mechanisms for acetyl-CoA carboxylase	13
4	Sectioning of a second leaf of a maize seedling	36
5	Purification of maize leaf acetyl-CoA carboxylase (Procedure II)	43
6	Effect of time on acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity	45
7	Effect of protein levels on acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity	46
8	Stability of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity in cell-free extracts of maize leaves	48

9	Levels of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity in developing maize leaves	49
10	Protein and chlorophyll levels in developing maize leaves	51
11	Changes in fatty acid levels during cell development in the maize leaf	54
12	Changes in the levels of individual fatty acids during cell development in the maize leaf	57
13	Changes in protein levels during cell development in the maize leaf	59
14	Changes in acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity during cell development in the maize leaf	61
15	Changes in acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity during cell development in the maize leaf	62
16	Acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity in the developing leaf of maize seedlings	64
17	Changes in chlorophyll levels during cell development in the maize leaf	66
18	Schematic diagram showing various sections of a nine-day-old maize seedling	71

19	Autoradiograph of ^{35}S LR-streptavidin spotted directly on to nitrocellulose	74
20	Autoradiographs of biotin-specific probes of partially purified acetyl-CoA carboxylase	76
21	Arrangement of gel and nitrocellulose sheets in the transblotting apparatus during transblotting, for the investigation of transblotting time on protein transfer on to nitrocellulose	80
22	Protein transferred from a polyacrylamide gel to 2 sheets of nitrocellulose paper	81
23	Purification of maize leaf acetyl-CoA carboxylase (Procedure I)	83
24	Precipitation of acetyl-CoA carboxylase and protein by polyethylene glycol (PEG)	87
25	Precipitation of acetyl-CoA carboxylase and protein by ammonium sulphate	89
26	Elution profile from avidin-affinity column	93
27	Autoradiograph of biotin-containing proteins and total protein eluted from the avidin-affinity column	98

28	Elution of biotin-containing protein from the avidin-affinity column	99
29	SDS-15% polyacrylamide gel of the fractions containing Peak 2	100
30	Estimation of the molecular weights of protein bands from 15% polyacrylamide gels	101
31	Elution of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity and biotin-containing protein from the avidin-affinity column	105
32	Biotin-containing protein and total protein from rat liver, present in the eluted fractions from the avidin-affinity column	106

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>		<u>Page</u>
I	Km values of acetyl-CoA and HCO_3^- for acetyl-CoA carboxylase obtained from different plant sources	19
II	Fatty acid composition of lipids in the second leaf of the maize seedling	56
III	Acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity observed in the physiological range of ATP, ADP, Mg^{2+} concentrations, and pH present in the stroma of chloroplasts in the light and dark	68
IV	Distribution of acetyl-CoA carboxylase activity between tissues of nine-day-old maize seedlings	72
V	Effect of ATP and MgCl_2 on avidin inhibition of acetyl-CoA carboxylase from maize	77
VI	Partial purification of acetyl-CoA carboxylase from maize leaves using Procedure I	85
VII	Partial purification of acetyl-CoA carboxylase from maize leaves using Procedure II	92

VIII	Effect of flow rate on the binding of acetyl-CoA carboxylase to the avidin-affinity column	96
IX	Purification of acetyl-CoA carboxylase from rat liver	104