

1 Research Article

2 **The growth of yeast and fungi, the formation** 3 **of β -glucan, and the antibacterial activities** 4 **during soybean fermentation in producing** 5 **tempeh**

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13 **Abstract**

14 Generally, the microorganism involved in soybean fermentation for the production of tempeh
15 is *Rhizopus oligosporus*. However, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, a type of β -glucan-producing
16 yeast, is known to be present and grow in the fermentation process. This study aimed to
17 investigate yeast and fungi growth dynamics, the β -glucan formation, and antibacterial
18 activity against *Escherichia coli* during the fermentation after adding *S. cerevisiae* as an
19 inoculum. The Randomized Complete Block Design (RCBD) was applied with two
20 treatments and three replications. Three kinds of starter culture are *S. cerevisiae*, *R.*
21 *oligosporus*, and the combination of both. The second treatment was fermentation time at
22 room temperature ($30\pm 2^\circ\text{C}$) for 0, 8, 16, 24, 32, and 40 hours. The dynamics were observed
23 every eight hours. The results explained that yeast grew during this process from a single *S.*
24 *cerevisiae* culture and a mixture of *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae*, but not from *R.*
25 *oligosporus* alone. The yeast grew during and until the end of fermentation and decreased
26 after 32 hours in the mixed cultures. The β -glucan formed in tempeh with all types of
27 inoculum, but the antimicrobial activity against *E. coli* increased with fermentation. The
28 highest β -glucan content and antibacterial activity of tempeh are from the mixed culture. In
29 conclusion, the addition of *S. cerevisiae* and *R. oligosporus* in soybean fermentation
30 produced tempeh with the highest β -glucan content and antibacterial activity against *E. coli*.
31 The presence of β -glucans suggests to higher health benefits of tempeh.

32 **Keywords:** soybean tempeh; yeast growth; *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*; *Rhizopus*
33 *oligosporus*; β -glucan production; fermentation time.

34

35 **Introduction**

36 Tempeh is a traditional Indonesian fermented food produced from soybeans by using
37 *Rhizopus* sp. This healthy functional food is due to bioactive compounds such as isoflavones.
38 It has nutritional advantages, unique textures, and pleasant flavors (Kustyawati *et al.*, 2014).
39 The quality of tempeh depends on the raw material and type of inoculum or starter culture

40 used. The kind of inoculum plays a vital role in making tempeh because it affects the tempeh's
41 quality.

42 Generally, tempeh uses an inoculum containing *R. oligosporus* (O'Toole, 2016). Other
43 important microorganisms involved in fermenting soybean to form tempeh are *R. oryzae* and
44 *R. stolonifer* (Bintari *et al.*, 2017). All three microorganisms ferment soybeans into tempeh.
45 *Rhizopus oligosporus* retains most of the nutrients in soybeans and increases protein
46 digestibility (Nout *et al.*, 2005). *R. oligosporus* synthesizes more protease enzyme, whereas
47 *R. oryzae* favors the α -amylase enzyme (Triwibowo, 2011).

48 Previous researches showed that the microflora in tempeh was not just fungi. Besides
49 *R. oligosporus*, yeast and bacteria were also involved during fermentation and significantly
50 contributed to producing functional metabolites (Kustyawati *et al.* 2020). Seumahu *et al.*
51 (2013) and Efriwati *et al.* (2013) found lactic acid bacteria (BAL) and yeasts in tempeh. A
52 kind of yeast found in tempeh fermentation was *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (Kustyawati *et*
53 *al.*, 2016), which is known as a β -glucan producing microorganism (Pengkumsri *et al.*, 2017).

54 In this study, *S. cerevisiae* was added intentionally to the soybean fermentation process
55 to produce tempeh with high β -glucan content and, therefore, to improve the functional
56 properties as a healthy food. *S. cerevisiae* cell wall is composed of β -(1,3) and β -(1,6)-glucan,
57 mannan, chitin (1-2%), and mannoproteins, comprising about 20-30% of the dry weight of
58 the cell wall (Naruemon *et al.*, 2013). β -Glucan is a polysaccharide with health benefits, one
59 of which as a biological response modifier (Corno *et al.* 2020), has anti-aging effects, and
60 antibiotic activity against bacteria, fungi, viruses, and parasites (Hetland *et al.* 2013).

61 The yeast could grow alongside fungi during soybean fermentation when a carbon
62 source was added, thus resulting in β -glucans in the tempeh produced (Rizal *et al.* (2020). In
63 this study, *S. cerevisiae* was added to the soybean fermentation without carbon sources. It
64 was essential to examine if the fungi addition without any carbon source in the fermentation
65 could give yeast and β -glucan in tempeh. Also, the presence of β -glucan due to yeast addition
66 might add the health benefits, including antibacterial activity. Therefore, this study aimed to
67 observe the effect of *S. cerevisiae*'s addition to the growth dynamics of yeast and fungi, the
68 β -glucan formation, and the antibacterial activities against *Escherichia coli* during soybean
69 fermentation to produce tempeh.

70 **Materials and Methods**

71 This study used pure cultures of *R. oligosporus* FNCC 6010, *S. cerevisiae* FNCC 3012,
72 *E. coli*, soybeans (brand "Soybean USA No. 1"), Nutrient Broth (NB), Nutrient Agar (NA),
73 Malt Extract Agar (MEA), and Potato Dextrose Agar (PDA). The experimental analysis
74 employed a Factorial Randomized Block Design with three replications. The first factor was
75 the three levels of cultures: *S. cerevisiae* (negative control), *R. oligosporus* (positive control),
76 and the mix of both microorganisms (the primary treatment). The second factor was the
77 fermentation time of six levels: 0, 8, 16, 24, 32, and 40 hours. During fermentation, we
78 observed the microbial population, the β -glucan content, and the antibacterial activity toward
79 *E. coli* in (0, 8, 16, 24, 32, and 40 hours) of fermentation time.

80 **Preparation of *S. cerevisiae* culture**

81 The *S. cerevisiae* was cultured in a sterile Malt Extract Agar (MEA) medium using a
82 sterilized inoculating loop needle with a scratchplate, then incubated for 24 to 48 hours at
83 28°C to form colonies. The colonies were harvested by adding 5 or 10 mL of distilled water
84 into the plate disk. The fungus cells were harvested and poured into a 50 mL centrifuge tube.
85 The tube was weighed and spun at 3000 rpm for 10 minutes to obtain a separate solid from
86 the supernatant. The supernatant was discarded, and the remaining solids were diluted with
87 25 to 30 mL of distilled water. The cells were transferred into a test tube containing 9 mL of

88 physiological saline solution and then homogenized using a vortex. The number of cells was
89 calculated using a hemocytometer. The required concentration was 10^7 cells/mL.

90 **Preparation of *R. oligosporus* culture**

91 *R. oligosporus* from a tilted agar was cultured in a sterile medium of Potato Dextrose
92 Agar (PDA) using a sterilized inoculating loop needle and a scratchplate. The yeast was
93 incubated for five to seven days at 30 to 35°C to obtain pure colonies, harvested in the same
94 way as the *S. cerevisiae*. The required concentration was 10^5 cells/mL, 100 times less than *S.*
95 *cerevisiae*.

96 **Production of Soybean Tempeh**

97 After removing the husks, 300 g soybean were soaked at room temperature overnight,
98 boiled in three times their water weight for 30 minutes, drained, cooled to the ambient
99 temperature, and inoculated.

100 Three separate 100 g samples of boiled soybeans received these inoculums:

- 101 (1) 1 mL suspension of 10^5 spores/mL of *R. oligosporus*,
- 102 (2) 1 mL suspension of 10^7 cells/mL of *S. cerevisiae*, and
- 103 (3) 1 mL suspension of 10^5 spores/mL of *R. oligosporus* + 1 mL suspension of 10^7
104 cells/mL of *S. cerevisiae*.

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106 The samples were packaged in plastics perforated for ventilation, then incubated at 32°C
107 for 40 hours, and observed every eight hours.

108 **Enumeration of Microorganisms**

109 The microorganisms were enumerated by culturing on PDA for the fungi and MEA for
110 the yeasts. Immediately at 0 hours, then at 8, 16, 24, 32, and 40 hours, consecutively, each
111 tempeh was sampled and diluted following the method of Kustyawati *et al.* (2009). Ten grams
112 of sample and 90 mL of peptone water were homogenized with a stomacher paddle blender
113 for five minutes, then diluted into the concentration series. One mL of each dilution was
114 planted with the appropriate surface plate calculation method on the media. Incubation
115 continued for 24 to 48 hours at 32°C to grow fungi and 30°C to grow yeast.

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118 **Analysis of β -Glucan**

119 The β -glucan formation was analyzed every eight hours during fermentation following
120 the Rizal *et al.* (2020). One gram of sample and 30 mL of 0.7 N NaOH was hydrolyzed for
121 six hours at 75°C and centrifuged at 10,000 rpm at 25°C for 30 minutes. The supernatant was
122 removed, and the residue was washed with 30 mL of 0.5 M acetic acid solution, and
123 centrifuged again at 10,000 rpm and 25°C for 30 minutes. This process was repeated three
124 times. The precipitated material was twice-washed with 20 mL of water and centrifuged at
125 5,000 rpm for 10 minutes.

126 The residue with 20 mL of ethanol was centrifuged at 5,000 rpm for 10 minutes, resulting
127 in wet β -glucan (crude). This biomass was dehydrated at 45°C oven for 24 hours and weighed
128 to obtain the dry weight of β -glucan (crude). The dry residue with 4 mL of 1M NaOH was
129 left for one hour. Afterward, the sample was diluted with 10 mL of sterile distilled water and
130 shaken with an orbital shaker. The sample was added with 2 mL of Pb-acetate and left to

131 stand for 30 minutes. Finally, one gram of sodium oxalate clears the solution, and two mL of
132 it with 0.5 mL of phenol 5% and 2.5 mL of sulfuric acid 5N was tested using a sugar-free
133 content spectrophotometer under 490 A wavelength.

134 **Assessment of Antibacterial Activities**

135 *Preparation of E. coli*

136 Pure *E. coli* (20 μ L) was grown on Mac Conkey Agar (MCA) media and incubated at
137 37°C for 24 hours. The bacteria was taken with an inoculating loop needle from the MCA
138 media and put into the Nutrient Broth (NB) media and incubated at 37°C for 24 hours. One
139 mL of the bacterium was diluted in 9 mL of physiological NaCl 0.85% in a sterile test tube
140 and homogenized using vortex for 15 seconds.

141 *Antibacterial Testing*

142 A total of 100 μ L of the bacteria was poured evenly on the surface of the NA medium
143 using the spread plate method and let dry. A total of 2 g sample from each treatment was
144 dissolved in 8 mL of sterile distilled water. A disc paper (5.5 mm diameter) was inserted into
145 each of these treatments and allowed to stand for 10 minutes. After that, the disc paper was
146 placed on the NA medium's surface containing the target bacteria, then incubated at 37°C for
147 24 hours. After 24 hours, the inhibitory area's diameter formed surrounding the disc paper
148 was measured using a slide. The sample's antibacterial activity was expressed by the
149 inhibition zone diameter as a clear area around the disc.

150 **Results and Discussion**

151 **Growth of Yeast and Fungi during Fermentation**

152 Figure 1 shows the growth of yeast and fungi in various types of cultures used in
153 fermentation of soybeans to tempeh. During fermentation of soybean with only *R.*
154 *oligosporus* culture, there was no increase in the amount of yeast (Figure 1A), whereas during
155 fermentation using only *S. cerevisiae* alone, the fungus did not grow (1B). In contrast, both
156 fungi and yeast reproduce well during the fermentation of soybeans with mixed cultures of
157 *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae* (Figure 1C).

158 Figure 1A shows the growth curve of *S. cerevisiae* in tempeh inoculated with only *S.*
159 *cerevisiae*. The adaptation phase occurred in zero up to 8 hours of fermentation with a
160 population of 10^7 CFU/g. For comparison, Sugoro *et al.* (2006) stated that the adaptation
161 phase in a modified 1% tapioca solution medium containing 10.21% glucose was at the sixth
162 hour of fermentation. Kusmiati *et al.* (2011) reported that in media with glucose as a carbon
163 source, this fungus' adaptation phase was four hours. On YNB medium containing 30% of
164 glucose, Ishmayana *et al.* (2012) had it at six hours of fermentation. Our adaptation phase in
165 this experiment was delayed than those of Sugoro *et al.* (2006), Kusmiati *et al.* (2011), and
166 Ishmayana *et al.* (2012) because there was no carbon source on the substrate as needed for
167 the growth during fermentation.

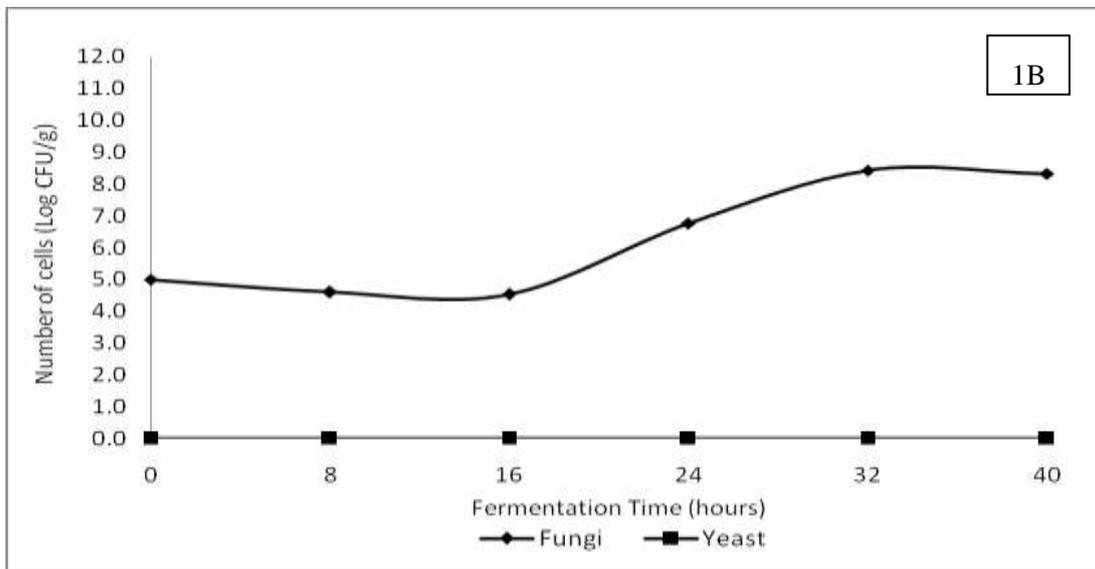
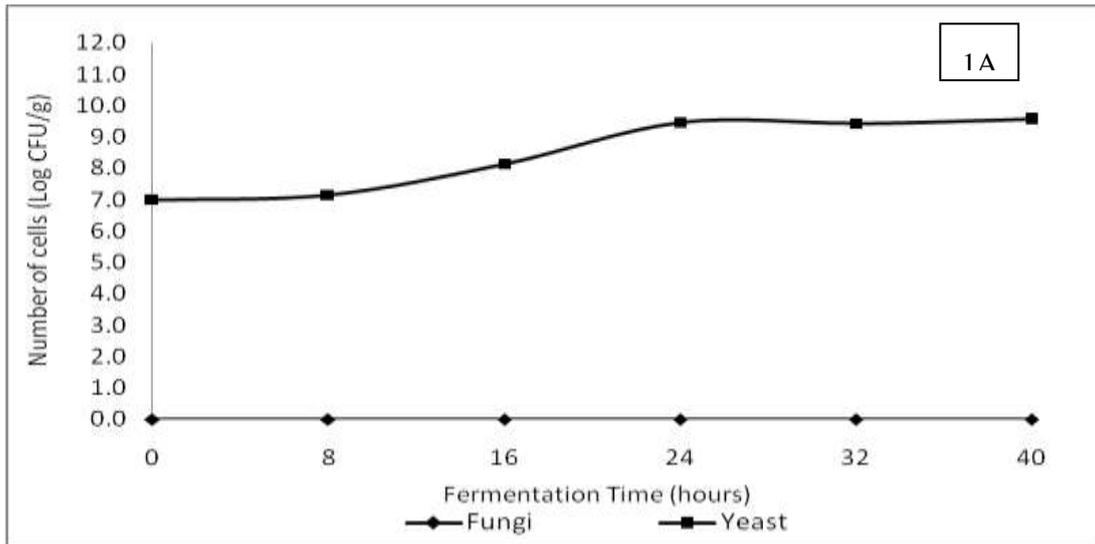
168 Figure 1A also shows that after eight hours of fermentation, the yeast experiences a sharp
169 increase in the number of cells from 1.73×10^8 CFU/g at 16 hours of fermentation to $3.33 \times$
170 10^9 CFU/g at 24 hours of fermentation. This increase indicated that yeast (*S. cerevisiae*)
171 entered an exponential phase after eight hours. Kavanagh (2005) stated that in the exponential
172 phase, the yeast reproduced by budding. The maximum specific growth rate (μ_{max}) of yeast
173 is 0.012 cells/hour based on the exponential phase. Furthermore, the yeast experienced a

174 stationary phase from 24 hours to 40 hours, with a population of 4.82×10^9 CFU/g. The death
175 phase of yeast appeared to occur after 40 hours of fermentation time.

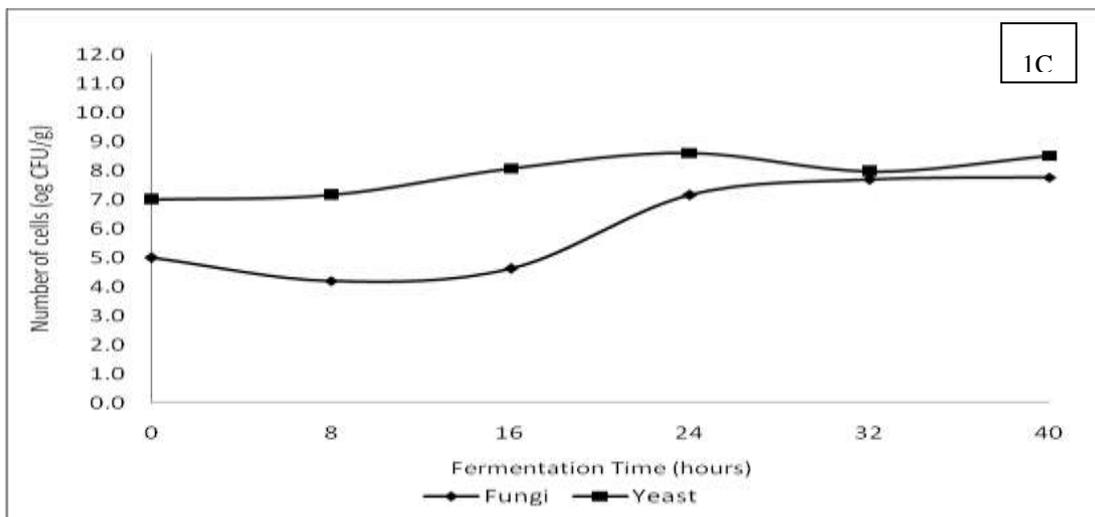
176 Yeast can grow during the fermentation process of soybeans inoculated with only *S.*
177 *cerevisiae* even though tempeh is not formed. *S. cerevisiae* as a sole culture (without the
178 addition of the primary tempeh fungus) in 40 hours of fermentation does not form tempeh
179 (Figure 2A). To make tempeh, an inoculum is needed. Otherwise the soybeans will simply
180 decay. *S. cerevisiae* increases, but there is no presence of *R. oligosporus* unless it is
181 inoculated. This result is in line with Wahono *et al.* (2011), who reported that during the
182 fermentation of sorghum seeds in bioethanol production, there was an increase in the growth
183 rate of *S. cerevisiae*. Yeast can grow by utilizing the nutrients present in the soybean
184 substrate. According to Kustyawati (2010), almost all foods provide sufficient nutrition to
185 support yeast growth.

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Figure 1. The growth curves of yeast and fungi during soybean fermentation inoculated with a single culture of *S. cerevisiae* (1A), a single culture of *R. oligosporus* (1B), and a mixed culture of both microorganisms (1C).

216 Figure 1B shows no growth of yeast during tempeh fermentation with *R. oligosporus* as
217 a single inoculum. Unless *S. cerevisiae* is inoculated, there will be no yeast growth. In
218 soybean fermentation using *R. oligosporus* as a single culture, there was no yeast growth, but
219 tempeh was still formed due to hyphae from *R. oligosporus* (Figure 2B). This result was in
220 line with Kustyawati (2009), which stated that yeast was not found during tempeh
221 fermentation using *R. oligosporus*. Thus, this study revealed that yeast in tempeh could only
222 be seen when the fermented soybeans were added with yeast.

223 The growth dynamics of yeast and the appearance of soybean during tempeh
224 fermentation inoculated with the mixed culture of *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae* are
225 presented in Figure 1C dan Figure 2C. Figure 1C shows that yeast's adaptation phase occurs
226 between zero and eight hours while the adaptation phase of fungi occurs between zero and
227 16 hours. In this sample, both microorganisms grew simultaneously and continued increasing
228 until the end of the experiment at 40 hours of fermentation. The appearance of tempe
229 inoculated with mixed cultures of *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae* during fermentation
230 showed that there was no significant fungal growth from 0 to 16 hours of fermentation and
231 soybeans were still intact (Figure 2C). After 16 hours of fermentation, fungi entered the
232 exponential growth phase marked by an increase in the number of *R. oligosporus* spores up
233 to 7.67×10^6 CFU/g at 24 hours of fermentation time and 2.73×10^7 CFU/g at 32 hours of
234 fermentation time.

235 This growth pattern is in line with the growth pattern of *S. boulardi*, which was
236 inoculated together with *R. oligosporus* for tempeh fermentation in a study conducted by
237 Kustyawati (2009). The yeast growth pattern in this treatment was similar to that of soybean
238 inoculated with *S. cerevisiae* alone. It indicates that *S. cerevisiae* utilizes the nutrients present
239 in soybeans for growth, and there is a mutually beneficial symbiosis between *R. oligosporus*
240 and *S. cerevisiae* during fermentation. According to Kustyawati (2009), there may be a
241 mutually helpful symbiosis in nutrient availability between *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae*
242 during tempeh fermentation to achieve synergistic growth. *Rhizopus oligosporus* breaks
243 down carbohydrate, fat, and protein into simple forms, and *S. cerevisiae* absorbs the elements
244 C, H, O, and N from them. In turn, enzymatic activity by *S. cerevisiae* benefits *R. oligosporus*.

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Figure 2. The appearance of soybean inoculated with a single culture of *S. cerevisiae* (2A), a single culture of *R. oligosporus* (2B), and mixed culture of both microorganisms (2C) during tempeh fermentation.

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Formation of β -Glucan

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All types of starter cultures increased the β -glucan content of tempeh over time (Figure 3). The β -glucan content of tempeh was higher (0.05% w/w), compared to that without inoculum. *S. cerevisiae* and the mixed inoculum produce higher β -glucan content in the resulting tempeh than soybeans without inoculum.

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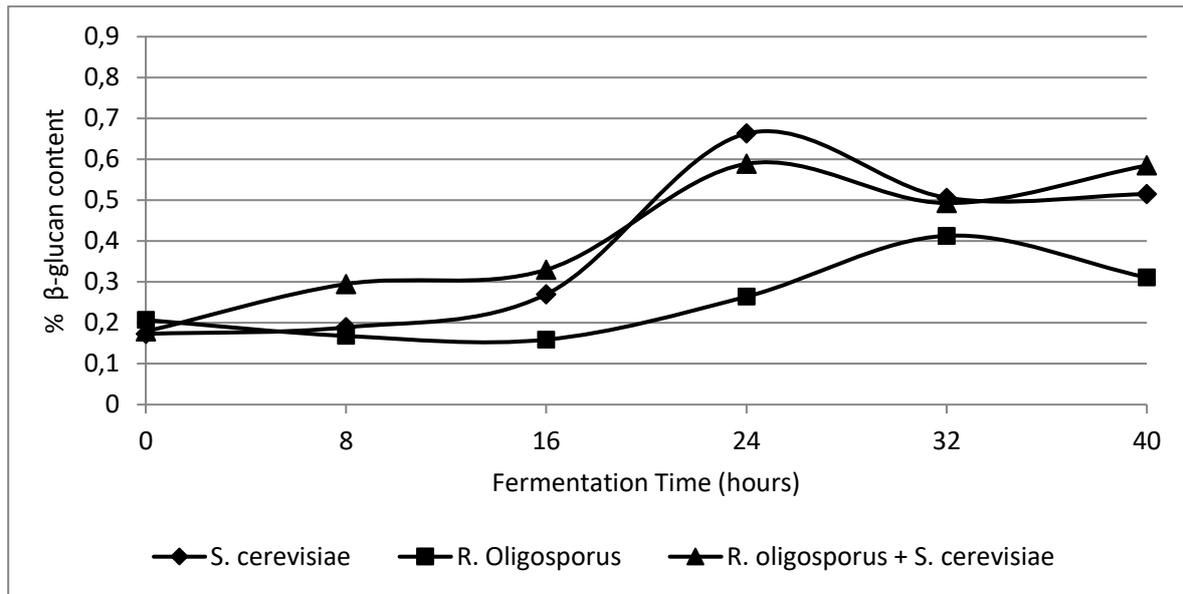
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β -Glucan can be taken from *S. cerevisiae*'s cell wall by alkaline extraction, but further purification is needed (Javmen *et al.*, 2012). Commercial tempeh inoculum contains not only *R. oligosporus* but also other microorganisms and fillers such as rice flour (Sukardi and Purwaningsih, 2008). The β -glucan content depends on the addition of *S. cerevisiae* (Kusmiati, 2007) because its cell wall contains β -(1,3) and β -1,6) glucans (Naruemon *et al.*, 2013).



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273 Figure 3. The β -glucan content of soybean fermented using three kinds of starter culture.

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Soybeans inoculated with *S. cerevisiae* contained more β -glucan than those without *S. cerevisiae* (Figure 3). These results agreed with Thontowi *et al.* (2007) that the β -glucan content of *S. cerevisiae* in cultures with N peptone sources tended to increase along with fermentation time and was relatively constant by the end of fermentation time (84 hours). Kusmiati *et al.* (2011) also reported an increase in β -glucan production using different carbon sources, for example, by utilizing sugar mill waste (molasses) as a fermentation medium. Increased β -glucan production follows the increasing number of *S. cerevisiae* cells. The formation of β -glucans continues until *S. cerevisiae* reaches a stationary growth phase. Kim *et al.* (2014) reported that the β -glucan content of polysaccharides in black rice bran fermented by *L. edodes* increases with time.

Figure 3 shows that the β -glucan content of tempeh (0.578%) from this study is higher than that of Rizal *et al.* (2018) with 0.076%. Shokri *et al.* (2008) obtained β -glucan from *S. cerevisiae* cell walls using NaOH with 27.5% of β -glucan, whereas Varelas *et al.* (2016) got 40% of β -glucan. Meanwhile, our percentages ranged from 0.05% to 0.663%, significantly lower than the numbers previously mentioned. This difference was caused by the different methods used to extract β -glucan. In this study, the β -glucan content was investigated from the resulting fermented soybean flour, while the β -glucan content was observed by Shokri *et al.* (2008) and Varelas *et al.* (2016) was directly isolated from the cell wall of *S. cerevisiae*.

This study showed that the addition of *S. cerevisiae* in the making of tempeh could increase yeast growth and β -glucan content of tempeh. The highest content of β -glucan was found in tempeh, which was made by adding a mixed culture of *R. oligosporus* and *S. cerevisiae* inoculum at fermentation time of 40 hours (0.578% w/w) (Figure 3).

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Antimicrobial Activities of Tempeh during Fermentation

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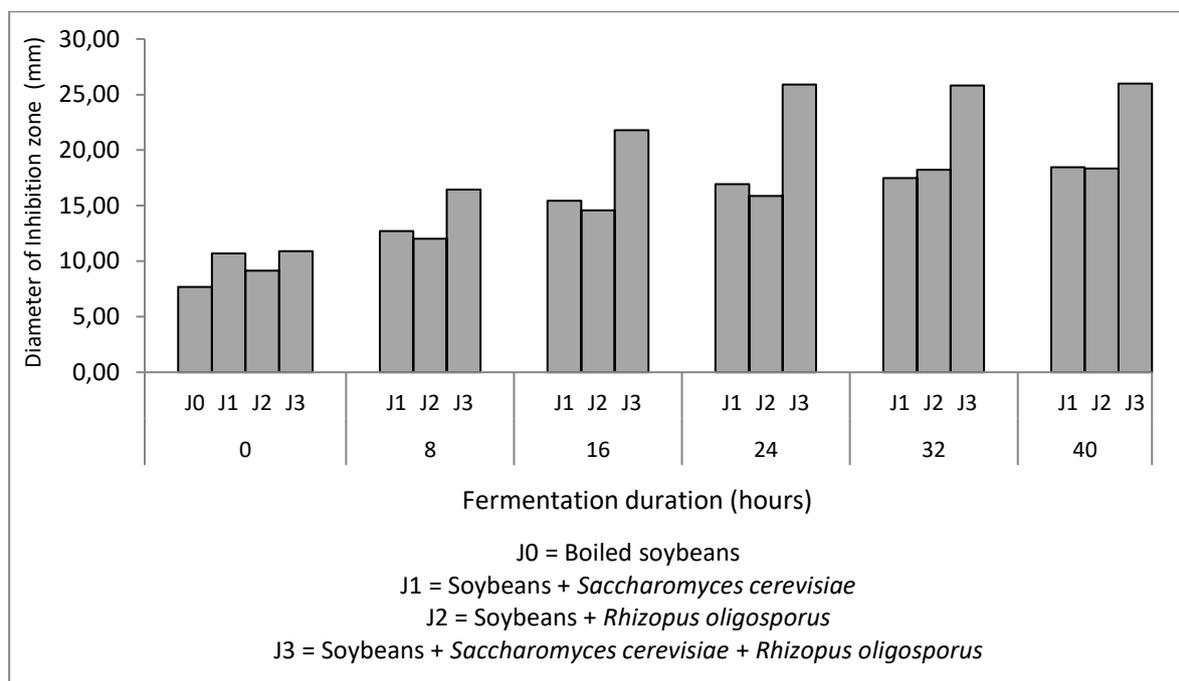
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Antibacterial activity testing was carried out during the fermentation process of soybeans added with various cultures (soybeans + *S. cerevisiae*, soybeans + *R. oligosporus*, soybeans + *S. cerevisiae* + *R. oligosporus*). In this study, tempeh's antibacterial activity was determined by measuring the inhibitory zone's diameter in the form of a clear area around the disc paper. The results showed that tempeh's antibacterial activity increased along with fermentation time for all treatments of starter culture types. The highest inhibitory zone appeared in tempeh fermented by the mixed starter culture at 40 hours of fermentation time, 25.98 ± 0.56 mm. Meanwhile, the lowest inhibition area diameter was in soybeans without

306 added inoculum with 7.68 ± 0.39 mm. The diameters of the tempeh inhibition area against *E.*
307 *coli* are different in various cultures and fermentation times (Figure 3).

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310 Figure 4. Antibacterial activities of soybean inoculated by a culture of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, a culture of
311 *Rhizopus oligosporus*, and a mixed culture of both during tempeh fermentation.

312 Figure 4 shows that the boiled soybeans without any starter culture addition could still
313 inhibit the growth of *E. coli* with an inhibitory area diameter of 7.68 ± 0.39 mm. The content
314 of isoflavones in soybeans causes the antibacterial activity of soy. According to Kustyawati
315 (2009), antibacterial activity happens because soybeans alone contained isoflavones in the
316 form of genistein (0.25 ± 0.60) and daidzein (0.69 ± 0.20). Additionally, according to
317 Dhayakaran *et al.* (2015), soy isoflavones also show antibacterial activity against several
318 pathogens such as *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*.

319 The addition of soybeans with all three types of starter cultures caused an improvement
320 antibacterial activity during fermentation that continued to increase along with fermentation
321 time. Both *S. cerevisiae* and *R. oligosporus* contribute to improving antibacterial activity
322 during tempeh fermentation. The highest antibacterial activity was in tempeh added with
323 mixed cultures of *S. cerevisiae* and *R. oligosporus* after 40 hours of fermentation. The
324 increase in tempeh antibacterial activity during soybean fermentation by *S. cerevisiae* and *R.*
325 *oligosporus* was related to tempeh β -glucan content, which also increased (Figure 3). These
326 results are consistent with research conducted by Rizal *et al.* (2020) that increasing the
327 number of these two microorganisms escalates the β -glucan content, thus increasing the
328 antibacterial activity of tempeh. As stated by Hetland *et al.* (2013), β -glucans are compounds
329 that are antagonistic to several microorganisms, including bacteria, mold, yeast, and viruses.

330 The increasing antibacterial activity of tempeh during fermentation is also caused by
331 the increase in the number of soy isoflavones. Kustyawati *et al.* (2020) showed that soybean
332 added with *S. cerevisiae* and *R. oligosporus* contained daidzein and genistein of
333 approximately 225 and 465, respectively. Increasing the amount of isoflavones increases the
334 inhibitory activity against bacteria because isoflavones act as antimicrobials (Mambang *et*
335 *al.*, 2014).

336 **Conclusions**

337 The addition of *S. cerevisiae* and *R. oligosporus* as mixed inoculums in tempeh's
338 fermentation resulted in higher growth of yeast and fungi, forming beta-glucan and
339 antibacterial activity of tempeh than without the addition of yeast. Therefore, the tempeh can
340 have better functional properties as healthy food due to the health benefits of β -glucan. *In*
341 *vivo* studies need to be done to prove the effect of adding both microorganisms on improving
342 tempeh's functional properties in mice.

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353

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