

## Strain Improvement: Strategies for Achieving Goals

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## DESCRIPTION

Strain improvement is the process of modifying or enhancing the characteristics of microorganisms such as bacteria, fungi, and yeasts through genetic, metabolic, or physiological modifications to increase their utility in industrial or research applications. It is a crucial aspect of biotechnology and has been widely applied in various fields, including biopharmaceutical production, food and beverage processing, bioremediation, and bioenergy production. There are several methods used for strain improvement, including classical mutagenesis, recombinant DNA technology, and metabolic engineering. Classical mutagenesis involves the use of physical or chemical agents to induce random mutations in the DNA of the microorganism, leading to variations in its phenotype. Recombinant DNA technology involves the introduction of foreign DNA into the microorganism to alter its genetic makeup, while metabolic engineering involves the modification of specific metabolic pathways in the microorganism to improve its productivity or yield.

One of the primary objectives of strain improvement is to enhance the productivity or yield of the microorganism in a given process. For example, in biopharmaceutical production, the yield of the desired protein product can be increased by modifying the expression levels of the target gene in the microorganism or by enhancing the secretion capacity of the host cell. In food and beverage processing, strain improvement can be used to enhance the flavor, texture, or nutritional content of the product. In bioenergy production, the efficiency of the process can be improved by increasing the yield of the target product or by reducing the production of unwanted byproducts.

Another important objective of strain improvement is to enhance the robustness or resilience of the microorganism to various stress conditions. Microorganisms are exposed to a wide range of environmental stresses, such as high temperature, low pH, and high osmolality, during industrial processes. Strain improvement can be used to enhance the tolerance of the microorganism to these stresses, thereby increasing its viability and and stability in the process. Strain improvement has also been used to create novel microorganisms with unique properties or functions. For example, genetically modified bacteria have been developed that can degrade environmental pollutants or produce novel compounds with pharmaceutical or industrial applications. In some cases, strain improvement has been used to develop microorganisms with improved safety or regulatory compliance.

One of the key challenges in strain improvement is the identification of the most promising candidate strains for further development. Screening and selection of the best strains can be a time-consuming and labor-intensive process, particularly for complex traits such as productivity or robustness.

High-throughput screening methods, such as automated fermentation systems, genome sequencing, and transcriptomic analysis, have been developed to facilitate the identification of potential candidates. Another challenge in strain improvement is the potential for unintended effects or negative impacts on the environment or human health. The use of genetically modified microorganisms in industrial processes has raised concerns about their potential to escape into the environment and cause unintended consequences. There is also concern about the potential for unintended effects on human health, particularly in the case of genetically modified microorganisms that are used in food or drug production. In conclusion, strain improvement is an essential aspect of biotechnology that has enabled the development of novel and improved microorganisms for a wide range of industrial and research applications. The process of strain improvement involves the modification of the genetic, metabolic, or physiological characteristics of the microorganism to enhance its productivity, robustness, or functionality. While strain improvement has many potential benefits, it also presents several challenges, including the identification of promising candidate strains, the potential for unintended effects, and the need for careful regulation and oversight. Continued research and development in strain improvement will be critical to advancing the field of biotechnology and addressing the complex challenges facing society.

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