

## Degradation of corn stover components with microwave torrefaction

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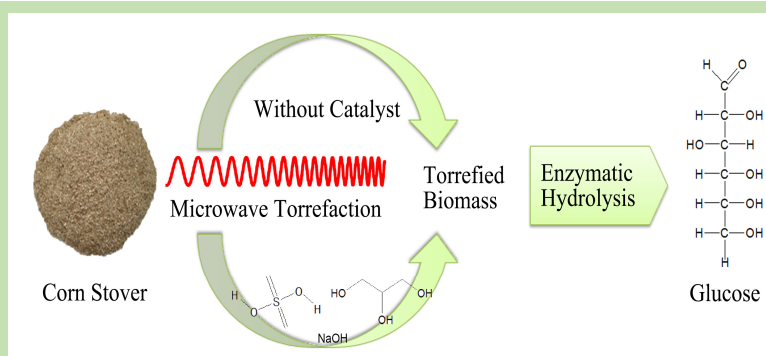
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**Abstract:** As an indispensable step in biomass utilization chain, the current pretreatment methods cannot meet the industrial production requirements of low cost, low pollution and high efficiency. New technology development is necessary. In this work, microwave irradiation-based torrefaction pretreatment was employed to investigate the degradation of the major components in corn stover with or without catalysts. In addition, the destruction and change of corn stover structure before/after pretreatment and enzymatic hydrolysis were also studied. The results showed that the monomers of the three major components (cellulose, hemicellulose and lignin) were transformed dramatically with microwave treatment. However, they were not degraded from the polymer structure. With the presence of catalysts, the microwave torrefaction presented selective degradation effect on corn stover. The addition of acid, alkali or glycerol in the pretreatment process increased the content of cellulose. NaOH was observed to be the most effective catalyst. The cellulose content increased from 33% to 42%. The contents of other components in the solids were significantly reduced. Enzymatic hydrolysis experiments on the corn stover obtained from different pretreatments. After microwave torrefaction for 20 min, the yield of glucose increased from 12% to 17% with the enzymatic hydrolysis rate of cellulose increased from 33% to 65%. NaOH as a catalyst in the pretreatment process could significantly improve the enzymatic hydrolysis rate of cellulose. The glucose yield was increased from 12% to 30%. While the enzymatic hydrolysis of the corn stover pretreated with sulfuric acid or glycerol presented a slight effect or no effect. Microwave torrefaction increased temperature without the use of pressure vessels and organic solvents compared to single microwave irradiation process. Due to the unique advantage such as easy operation and less energy consumption, the microwave torrefaction can be developed into a practical and efficient biomass pretreatment technology.



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**Key words:** biomass; microwave torrefaction; pretreatment; enzymatic hydrolysis

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# 微波烘焙预处理降解玉米秸秆

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**摘要:** 用微波可高效对生物质烘焙预处理, 考察了不同微波烘焙过程对玉米秸秆主要组分的降解作用及酸、碱、甘油催化剂对纤维素转化效率的影响, 并对预处理的玉米秸秆进行酶解实验。结果表明, 单纯的微波预处理对玉米秸秆中主要组分纤维素、半纤维素和木质素均有强烈的转化作用。无催化剂微波烘焙后, 样品中纤维素含量降低了 30%。在微波烘焙中添加酸、碱、甘油催化剂, 可选择性降解玉米秸秆中的半纤维素或木质素, 有效提高预处理后玉米秸秆中的纤维素含量, 添加 NaOH 后纤维素含量增加最明显, 由 33%增至 42%, 纤维素最高转化率达 65%。

**关键词:** 生物质; 微波烘焙; 预处理; 酶解

**中图分类号:** TK6

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## 1 前言

生物质利用的关键前提是预处理。目前生物质预处理的方法一般有稀酸法、蒸汽爆破法、水热法、氨爆法和生物法等<sup>[1-3]</sup>。Dinabandhu 等<sup>[4]</sup>用浓度为 4~20 g/L 的硫酸以 1:10 的固液比对野草进行预处理, 总还原糖最高得率为 457 mg/g, 比未处理原料(64 mg/g)大幅提升。Yang 等<sup>[5]</sup>用碱催化水热预处理竹子, 分步水解糖化发酵乙醇产率为 9.6 g/100 g。Song 等<sup>[6]</sup>用碱处理结合水热法去除木质素, 提升生物质糖化发酵生产乙醇效率。氨处理方法较便捷也可提升酶解率, 但选择性较差, 多适用于高纤维素低木质素的硬木<sup>[7]</sup>。但这些方法目前仍不能满足生物炼制工业低成本、低污染、高效率的需求<sup>[8]</sup>。

微波是一种高效的介电加热方式, 高速透入物料内, 物料中的极性分子(如水分子)通过分子偶极作用改变取向, 频繁碰撞, 获得能量, 并以热形式释放使物料升温<sup>[9]</sup>。微波用于预处理植物纤维素原料已有研究。Azuma 等<sup>[10]</sup>和 Ooshima 等<sup>[11]</sup>用微波预处理植物纤维素原料, 170~230 °C 下可部分降解木质素和半纤维素, 增加其可及度, 提高植物纤维素的酶水解率。

为改进预处理效果, 全明等<sup>[12]</sup>用微波和酸碱处理生物质, 微波-硫酸预处理时, 190 °C 下预处理得糖率及酶解得糖率分别为 44.6%和 30.3%; 微波-氢氧化钠预处理时, 130 °C 下预处理得糖率及酶解得糖率分别为 1.5%和 80.0%。这样的预处理过程必须在密闭容器中进行, 只有在一定压力下才能使处理温度达到要求, 因此需增加设备投入。Kithcaiya 等<sup>[13]</sup>在常压甘油水溶液中预处理植物纤维素原料, 发现高温( $T > 160$  °C)是微波预处理所必

需的, 其实质是高温下酸催化的自水解反应, 而在  $T \leq 100$  °C 时微波几乎没有作用, 结果与文献<sup>[10,11]</sup>类似。使用甘油可在常压下达达到预处理所需的温度, 但需使用大量有机溶剂。

既达到预处理所需的高温, 又不使用压力容器或有机溶剂, 是预处理降低成本的一个突破口。烘焙是一种热化学预处理方法, 可在惰性气体环境下将生物质加热到 200~300 °C, 将生物质材料中的水分和低沸点化合物去除, 增加能量密度, 材料更容易粉碎<sup>[14]</sup>。不同的烘焙温度可选择性降解纤维质原料中的半纤维素、纤维素和木质素<sup>[15]</sup>。Sluiter 等<sup>[16]</sup>将烘焙预处理作为一个工艺步骤引入纤维素乙醇工艺中, 但与其它预处理相比, 初步实验结果不理想。

本工作将微波预处理与烘焙预处理相结合, 研究微波对玉米秸秆主要组分的降解作用, 在烘焙过程中添加酸、碱、甘油催化剂破坏秸秆结构, 增强酶解转化率, 为实现高效低污染生物质预处理提供一定借鉴。

## 2 实验

### 2.1 材料与试剂

硫酸、磷酸、盐酸、乙醇和氢氧化钡(分析纯, 北京化学工业集团有限责任公司), 氢氧化钠和甘油(分析纯, 西陇化工股份有限公司), 玉米秸秆采自北京延庆, 纤维素酶(山东泽生生物科技有限公司)。

将玉米秸秆风干后用粉碎机粉碎成直径小于 1 mm 的颗粒, 装入可封口的塑料袋中在室温下保存。玉米秸秆样品用水彻底清洗, 去除水溶物。水洗玉米秸秆的组成见表 1。

表 1 水洗玉米秸秆的组成

Table 1 Components of corn stover after water washing

No.	Component	Content/wt%
1	Residual	70.19±0.12
1-1	Cellulose	22.02±0.23
1-2	Hemicellulose	16.23±0.21
1-3	Lignin	10.67±0.32
1-4	Ash	2.00±0.30
1-5	Others	19.27±0.55
2	Soluble	29.80±0.12
2-1	Glucose	7.08
2-2	Xylose	10.23
2-3	Arabinose	0.2
2-4	Others	12.29
3	Total	100

可看出,粉碎后的玉米秸秆含较高的单糖,其在水提浓缩后即可用于乙醇发酵等。为考察微波对玉米秸秆的作用效果并减少单糖降解,本实验除对照组外均使用水洗后的玉米秸秆,水分仪测定玉米秸秆含水量约为7%,水洗后的玉米秸秆含水量约为80%。

2.2 实验设备

RT-34S 型植物粉碎机(北京锐捷玉诚机械设备有限公司),gilent 1260 Infinity 型高效液相色谱仪(HPLC,安捷伦科技有限公司),HR83-P 型快速卤素水分仪(梅特勒-托利多仪器有限公司),SX2-8-10NP 马弗炉(上海一恒科技有限公司)。

微波处理实验装置示意图如图 1 所示。

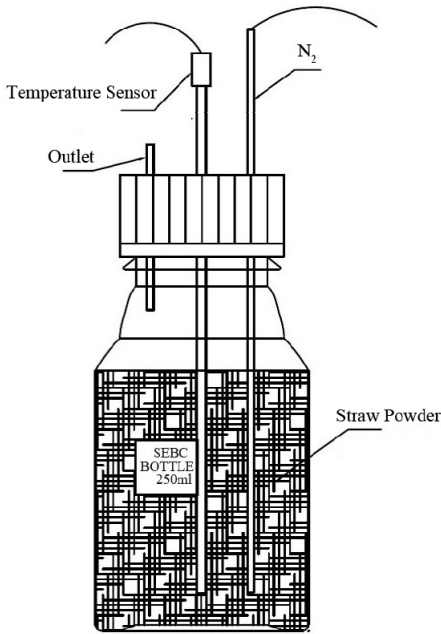


图 1 微波处理实验装置示意图

Fig.1 Schematic diagram of experimental microwave device

2.3 实验方法

2.3.1 微波处理

微波反应器最大输出功率为 800 W,可设定 10 档,最高温度为 250 ℃。当反应体系的温度接近设定值时,反应器的微处理器会自动调节微波输出功率使反应体系温度维持在设定值,微波频率为 2450 MHz。

分别称取玉米秸秆粉 35 g、水洗秸秆粉 120 g 放入 250 mL 玻璃瓶中,塞上塞子,通入氮气置换瓶中氧气,将温度传感器插入物料中,将玻璃瓶放入微波反应器中微波处理 5~20 min。不同样品设置的最高温度、时间和功率不同。微波处理过程中保持氮气通入,压力保持在 0.04 MPa。

2.3.2 分析方法

生物质组分含量测定采用 Sluiter 等<sup>[16]</sup>的方法。样品经 95%乙醇索氏提取 24 h,分步用 72%和 4%硫酸水解纤维素和半纤维素,水解后样品过滤得水解液和滤渣,水解液中和后用 HPLC 测定葡萄糖、木糖、阿拉伯糖等单糖的浓度,换算成纤维素和半纤维素含量。滤渣干燥称重,在马弗炉中灰化后干燥称重,得灰分和 Klason 木素含量。

为考察微波烘焙后纤维素的可酶解性,采用 Dowe 等<sup>[17]</sup>的方法进行酶解产糖实验,纤维素酶额外添加β葡萄糖苷酶。采用 Adney 等<sup>[18]</sup>的方法测定的酶液中滤纸酶活为 46.65±0.85 FPU/mL,β葡萄糖苷酶酶活为 4.97±0.14 IU/mL。

3 结果与讨论

3.1 微波烘焙的温度曲线

用微波处理生物质,当生物质含水量较低时温度上升迅速,无氮气保护时生物质很快焦化、冒烟、燃烧。有氮气保护时,生物质可在较高温下维持一定时间而无表观焦化等氧化现象。图 2 是不同预处理条件下生物质的温度变化,微波功率均为 640 W。从图可见,未经预处理的样品初始含水量较高时,温度上升较缓,在约 100 ℃处有一个小的平台期,此时物料中水分被快速蒸发,温度继续上升;当物料初始含水量较低时,温度基本保持直线上升;添加甘油后,由于其沸点较高,物料升温较迅速,没有明显的平台期。与常规的外源加热烘焙不同,采用微波作为热源烘焙时,即使用氮气保护,随微波功率增加和处理时间延长,物料仍会炭化,尤其是当物料中添加强氧化剂(如硫酸)时。

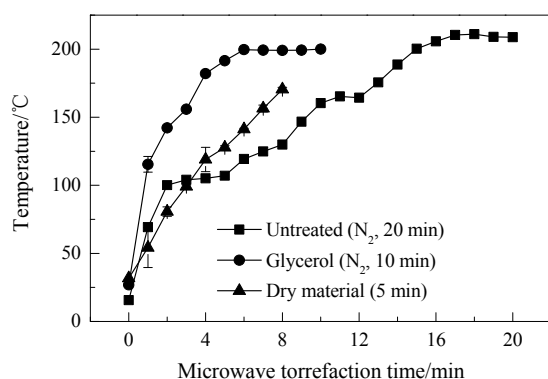


图 2 微波烘焙物料的温度

Fig.2 Temperature changes during microwave torrefaction

### 3.2 无催化剂时微波烘焙后三大组分含量的变化

无催化剂存在时微波烘焙后所得固形物组分的含量如图 3 所示。长时间(12~20 min)微波处理后,样品中纤维素含量降低约 30%,而其它组分含量明显提高,表明微波烘焙处理会将较大比例的纤维素转化为其它化合物。未水洗的玉米秸秆粉微波烘焙时,样品中纤维素含量升高。

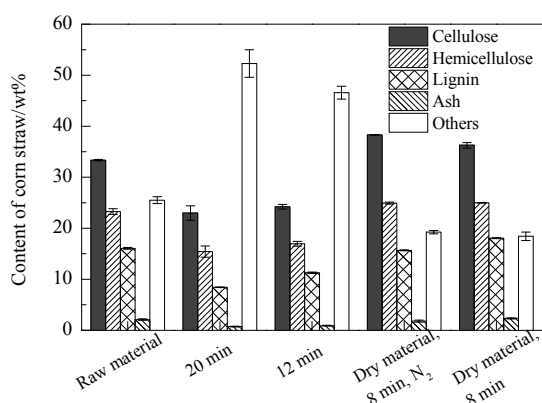


图 3 无催化剂时微波烘焙前后固形物组分的含量

Fig.3 Contents of solid residual before and after microwave torrefaction without catalysts

### 3.3 有催化剂时微波烘焙后三大组分含量的变化

以纤维质原料为底物酶解发酵产乙醇时,选择性降解半纤维素或木质素对剩余的纤维素组分的后续酶解起积极作用。通常添加一定量稀酸可降解半纤维素,添加碱可选择性降解木质素。根据纤维素和半纤维素降解温度不同,选择特定的温度也是常用的手段。为达到选择性降解结构性组分的目的,在微波烘焙物料中添加硫酸、氢氧化钠或甘油三种催化剂。如图 4 所示,在微波烘焙中添加以上 3 种催化剂都可增加纤维素含量,添加 NaOH 的效果最明显,纤维素含量由 33wt%增至 42wt%,固形物中其它组分含量显著降低。

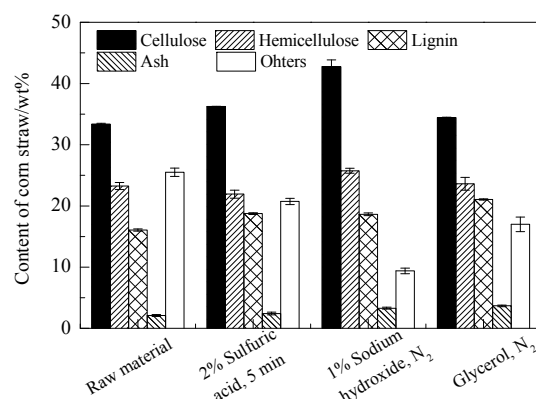


图 4 催化剂存在下微波烘焙前后固形物组分的含量

Fig.4 Components of solid residual before and after microwave torrefaction with catalysts

表 2 为不同微波烘焙条件下固形物得率。由表可见,不添加催化剂时微波烘焙的固形物得率较高,约为 95%。处理时间不同,纤维素收率明显不同。随时间增加,纤维素、半纤维素和木质素含量降低,而其它组分含量增加,表明微波烘焙使生物质结构性组分发生结构变化,但仍以高分子状态存在于固形物中,不溶于水。当使用催化剂时,固形物得率为 80%~85%,明显下降,纤维素收率较高,均在 93%以上。烘焙中添加不同催化剂时,半纤维素均明显减少,硫酸为催化剂时作用最明显。添加催化剂对木质素的影响较小,3 种催化剂均能获得较高的 Klason 木素收率。

表 2 不同预处理方法的固形物得率

Table 2 Solid yields with different pretreatment methods

Substrate	Condition	Solid yield/%
Air-dried CS <sup>1)</sup>	Milled ( $\leq 1$ mm)	100.00
MCS <sup>2)</sup>	Washing with water	70.19
WMCS <sup>3)</sup>	2% H <sub>2</sub> SO <sub>4</sub> , MWI <sup>4)</sup> 5 min	83.70
WMCS	NaOH 1%, N <sub>2</sub>	81.26
WMCS	Glycerol, N <sub>2</sub> , MWI 10 min	85.01
WMCS	MWI 20 min, N <sub>2</sub>	95.89
WMCS	MWI 12 min, N <sub>2</sub>	94.91
MCS	MWI 8 min, N <sub>2</sub>	71.04
MCS	MWI 8 min, N <sub>2</sub>	72.10

Note: 1) Corn stover; 2) Milled corn stover; 3) Water-washed milled corn stover; 4) Microwave irradiation.

### 3.4 微波烘焙固形物的酶解率

#### 3.4.1 无催化剂微波烘焙后固形物的酶解率

样品的可酶解性是判断预处理效果的关键因素,图 5 为不同条件下,不加催化剂时微波烘焙样品的酶解率。从单位生物质的葡萄糖产量来看,微波烘焙 20 min 后,葡萄糖产率(g 葡萄糖/100 g 干物料)从 12%增至 17%,纤维素酶解率从 33%增至 65%。总体上产糖率和纤维素酶解率都不高,但结果表明微波烘焙起一定作用。

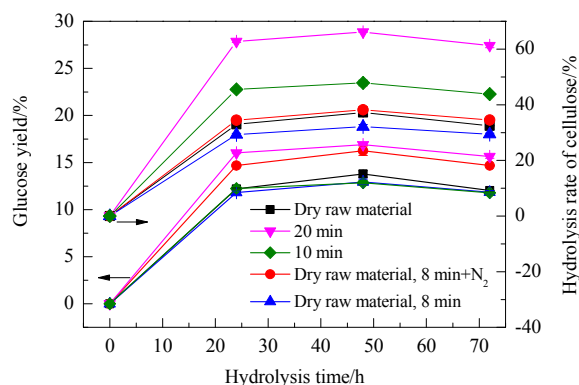


图5 无催化剂时微波烘焙后固形物的酶解产糖率和纤维素酶解率

Fig.5 Enzymatic hydrolysis rate of cellulose and glucose yield after microwave torrefaction without catalysts

### 3.4.2 催化剂作用下微波烘焙后固形物的酶解率

图6为添加不同催化剂后微波烘焙样品固形物的酶解效果。由图可见,添加  $H_2SO_4$  效果较小,甘油几乎没有效果,但添加  $NaOH$  后效果明显,葡萄糖产率从 12% 增至 30%,纤维素酶解率从 33% 增至 65%,原因是  $NaOH$  有利于木质素脱除,使纤维素暴露出更多酶结合位点,提高酶解效率。添加催化剂烘焙可选择性降解生物质组分,且剩余的纤维素可酶解性也显著提高。

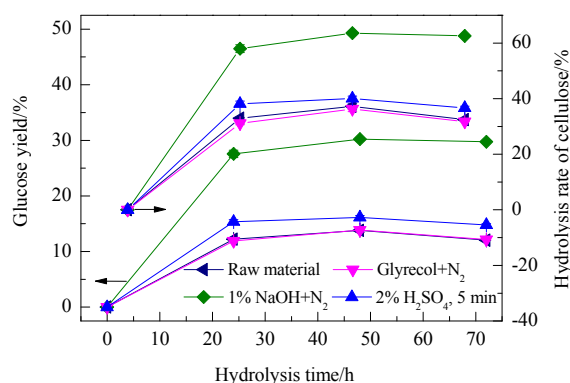


图6 不同催化剂下微波烘焙后固形物的酶解产糖率和纤维素水解率

Fig.6 Enzymatic hydrolysis rate of cellulose and glucose yield after microwave torrefaction with different catalysts

与微波处理相比,微波烘焙可在不使用压力容器和有机溶剂的前提下实现对生物质样品的高温处理。与普通烘焙相比,微波烘焙对生物质的高温预处理具备一定的优势,微波加热迅速,节约能源,效果显著。对其进一步优化可发展成微波烘焙生物质预处理技术。

## 4 结论

以微波为热源对生物质进行烘焙预处理,分析了生

物质在微波烘焙前后的组分变化、关键成分的收率及纤维素的酶解性,得到以下结论:

(1) 在微波烘焙中添加酸、碱、甘油催化剂,可选择性降解玉米秸秆中的半纤维素或木质素,有效提高纤维素含量。

(2) 烘焙中添加不同催化剂时,半纤维素均明显减少,硫酸为催化剂时作用最明显,半纤维素降至 79.38%。

(3) 以  $NaOH$  为催化剂时,纤维素含量由 33% 增至 42%,生物质的葡萄糖产率由 12% 增至 30%。

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