

1 *Listeria monocytogenes* has a functional chitinolytic system and an active  
2 lytic polysaccharide monooxygenase

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17 Running title: The chitinolytic system of *Listeria monocytogenes*

18

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22

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28 mass spectrometry, LC-MS.

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29 **ABSTRACT**

30 Chitinases and chitin-active lytic polysaccharide monoxygenases (LPMOs) are most commonly  
31 associated with chitin metabolism, but are also reported as virulence factors in pathogenic bacteria.  
32 *Listeria monocytogenes*, a well-known virulent bacterium, possesses two chitinases (ChiA and ChiB)  
33 and a multi-modular lytic polysaccharide monoxygenase (*LmLPMO10*). These enzymes have been  
34 related to virulence, but their role in chitin metabolism is poorly understood. It is thus of interest to  
35 functionally characterize the individual enzymes in order to shed light on their roles *in vivo*. Our  
36 results demonstrate that *L. monocytogenes* has a fully functional chitinolytic system. Both chitinases  
37 show substrate degradation rates similar to those of the non-processive endo-chitinase *SmChiC* from  
38 *Serratia marcescens*. Compared to the *S. marcescens* LPMO CBP21, *LmLPMO10* shows a similar  
39 rate, but different product profiles depending on the substrate. In LPMO-chitinase synergy  
40 experiments, CBP21 is able to boost the activity of both ChiA and ChiB more than *LmLPMO10*.  
41 Product analysis of the synergy assays revealed that the chitinases were unable to efficiently  
42 hydrolyse the LPMO products (chitooligosaccharide aldonic acids) with a degree of polymerization  
43 below four (ChiA and *SmChiC*) or three (ChiB). Gene transcription and protein expression analysis  
44 showed that *LmLPMO10* is neither highly transcribed nor abundantly secreted during growth of *L.*  
45 *monocytogenes* in a chitin-containing medium. The chitinases on the other hand are both abundantly  
46 secreted in the presence of chitin. Although *LmLPMO10* is shown to promote chitin degradation in  
47 tandem with the chitinases *in vitro*, the secretome and transcription data question whether this is the  
48 primary role of *LmLPMO10 in vivo*.

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50

51 **INTRODUCTION**

52 *Listeria monocytogenes* is a Gram-positive food-borne pathogenic bacterium, which upon ingestion  
53 can cause listeriosis, a disease of varying severity that can prove fatal for susceptible patient groups  
54 such as infants and the elderly. Outside human and animal hosts, the bacterium is known to inhabit  
55 terrestrial and marine environments, mainly adopting a saprophytic lifestyle [1-3]. Indeed, the *L.*  
56 *monocytogenes* genome harbors an array of carbohydrate-active enzymes that may be harnessed to  
57 degrade complex polysaccharide structures found in both plants and animals [4]. Although few  
58 studies have been conducted to investigate the activity of these enzymes towards plant  
59 polysaccharides, some effort has been made to elucidate the activity of the chitin-degrading enzymes.  
60 Chitin is a linear polysaccharide constituted by  $\beta$ -1,4 linked *N*-acetylglucosamine units (GlcNAc).  
61 This recalcitrant and insoluble carbohydrate is predominantly found in the exoskeletons of  
62 crustaceans and insects and in the cell walls of fungi.

63

64 GH18 chitinases depolymerize chitin chains by cleaving the  $\beta$ -1,4 glycosidic linkages through a  
65 hydrolytic reaction mechanism (Fig. 1A) yielding (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub> and GlcNAc as the major end products.  
66 The *L. monocytogenes* genome encodes two chitinases (ChiA and ChiB) that belong to the family 18  
67 of the glycoside hydrolases (GH18). ChiA only consists of a single GH18 catalytic module, whereas  
68 ChiB is a multi-domain chitinase containing an N-terminal GH18 catalytic module, followed by a  
69 long linker region attached to an FnIII-like module and a C-terminal CBM5/12 chitin-binding module  
70 (Fig. 1B). Both chitinases have been shown to be actively transcribed during growth of *L.*  
71 *monocytogenes* in media containing chitin [5] and the bacterium has also been shown to degrade  
72 chitin [6]. ChiA is known to be catalytically active [7] and both chitinases have been deemed  
73 important for the long-term survival of *L. monocytogenes* in minimal medium containing chitin [5,  
74 8]. Furthermore, ChiA and ChiB are both induced during growth in soil, where chitin is a common  
75 carbohydrate, indicating a metabolic role for these enzymes [9]. So far, neither of the chitinases have  
76 been biochemically characterized towards the natural, insoluble polymeric form of the chitin.

77

78 In addition to ChiA and ChiB, the *L. monocytogenes* genome harbors a gene (*lmo2467*) that encodes  
79 a lytic polysaccharide monooxygenase (*LmLPMO10*) belonging to the auxiliary activity family 10  
80 (AA10) of the carbohydrate-active enzymes (CAZy; [10]). The AA10 family contains enzymes  
81 previously classified in family 33 of the carbohydrate-binding modules (CBM33), and members of  
82 this family have also been referred to as chitin-binding proteins (CBPs, see [10] for details on

83 reclassification). *LmLPMO10* contains four domains; an N-terminal family LPMO10 catalytic  
84 module, followed by a linker region connected to an FnIII-like module trailed by two C-terminal  
85 family CBM5/12 chitin-binding modules (Fig. 1B).

86  
87 Lytic polysaccharide monooxygenases (LPMOs) represent a new enzyme family that is important for  
88 the efficient degradation of recalcitrant polysaccharides like chitin by a variety of bacterial species  
89 [11-16]. The enzymes are copper-dependent and cleave polysaccharide chains embedded in the  
90 crystalline regions of the substrate that are generally inaccessible to glycoside hydrolases [13, 17-21].  
91 LPMO activity contributes to both substrate depolymerization and increased accessibility of the  
92 substrate to enzymes. Cleavage of the glycosidic bond is achieved by oxidation of the C1 or C4  
93 carbon, which results in the generation of an aldonic acid or 4-ketoaldose, respectively [13, 22, 23].  
94 Chitin-targeting LPMOs have hitherto only been observed to oxidize the C1 carbon ([13, 15, 24, 25];  
95 Fig. 1A).

96  
97 The roles of glycoside hydrolases and LPMOs have mostly been described in the context of biomass  
98 conversion. In parallel to this metabolic aspect, there is an emerging body of literature that associates  
99 bacterial chitinases and LPMOs with virulence (see [26] for a comprehensive review). Specifically,  
100 the deletion of chitinases and LPMOs has been found to decrease bacterial adhesion to host epithelial  
101 cells, as well as attenuate infection in *in vivo* models in a number of pathogenic bacteria [26-31]. This  
102 is also the case for *L. monocytogenes*, for which both chitinases and *LmLPMO10* have been identified  
103 as virulence factors. *L. monocytogenes* single-gene mutants lacking the genes encoding ChiA, -B and  
104 *LmLPMO10* showed significantly reduced ability to colonize murine liver and spleen compared to  
105 the wild type [32]. A recent study showed that the role of ChiA is directly related to its enzymatic  
106 activity; successful colonization of mice was shown to depend on a catalytically active ChiA, which  
107 through an unknown mechanism, achieved downregulation of inducible nitric oxide synthase (iNOS),  
108 an important enzyme in the innate immune system [33]. The involvement of these proteins in the  
109 pathogenic lifestyle of *L. monocytogenes* raises the question of whether their main role is as chitin-  
110 assimilation facilitators, virulence factors or both.

111  
112 In order to evaluate the performance of the *L. monocytogenes* chitinolytic enzymes in a metabolic  
113 context, we have analyzed the chitin-degrading abilities of ChiA, ChiB and *LmLPMO10* and  
114 compared them to those of a well-characterized endo-chitinase, ChiC (henceforth referred to as

115 *SmChiC*), and an LPMO, CBP21, from *Serratia marcescens*. Transcription of *LmLPMO10* and  
116 secretion of the chitinolytic enzymes has also been evaluated by analysis of *L. monocytogenes*  
117 cultures grown with chitin as a carbon source.

118 **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

119

120 *Characterization of LmLPMO10*

121 Sequence analysis shows that homologues of *LmLPMO10* are present in a variety of bacterial species.  
122 Several of these enzymes are annotated as GlcNAc-binding proteins (abbreviated Gbp) due to  
123 sequence similarity to the *Vibrio cholerae* protein “GbpA” (henceforth called *VcGbpA* ) that was  
124 given this name because of its GlcNAc-binding properties [30]. *VcGbpA* is the only “Gbp”-type  
125 protein that is biochemically characterized [25, 34]. The protein contains an N-terminal LPMO10,  
126 followed by two bacterial surface-binding modules and a C-terminal CBM5/12 [34] and is primarily  
127 thought to play a role in virulence by mediating host-bacterium contact/adhesion [27, 30, 34-36]. The  
128 presence of the catalytic LPMO10 module in combination with chitin-binding modules raises the  
129 question whether *VcGbpA*, *LmLPMO10* and other “Gbp”-type proteins actually are enzymes that  
130 play a role in metabolism or have other catalytic functions.

131

132 In order to investigate the role of *LmLPMO10* in chitin degradation, substrate binding and activity  
133 assays were performed with various substrates. The binding preference of *LmLPMO10* proved to be  
134 relatively broad as strong binding was observed to  $\alpha$ -,  $\beta$ -chitin and cellulose (Fig. 2A), and  
135 irreversible binding to chitin beads prevented the use of this chromatographic medium for protein  
136 purification. Binding to insoluble substrates has been demonstrated previously for two of the module  
137 types represented in *LmLPMO10*, namely LPMO10s and CBM5/12s; LPMO10 modules have been  
138 shown to bind specifically to one of the chitin allomorphs [37-39], both chitin allomorphs [12, 15,  
139 40] or cellulose [41]. CBM5/12s occur regularly in chitinases where chitin binding has been  
140 demonstrated [42], but are also encountered in cellulases, where cellulose-binding has been shown  
141 [43]. It is thus likely that the broad binding specificity of *LmLPMO10* is caused by the combined  
142 action of the LPMO10 module and the tandem CBM5/12 module. For comparison, *VcGbpA*, which  
143 as previously noted also contains an LPMO10 and a CBM5/12 module, was shown to bind strongly  
144 to chitin, but only weakly to cellulose [34]. It should be noted that the occurrence of CBMs in tandem  
145 often results in an enhanced binding capacity [44], which would explain the stronger binding of  
146 *LmLPMO10* to cellulose compared to *VcGbpA*.

147

148 Upon incubation of *LmLPMO10* with  $\alpha$ -,  $\beta$ -chitin and cellulose and an external electron donor,  
149 soluble reaction products could be observed for both chitin substrates (Fig. 2B), but not for cellulose

150 (results not shown). Even though *LmLPMO10* binds cellulose, the lack of activity towards this  
151 substrate is not surprising since enzymes (and CBMs) that bind crystalline polysaccharides like chitin  
152 and cellulose often bind well to both substrates, as exemplified by Moser *et al.* [45]. The masses  
153 observed for the products (Fig. 2B) combined with HILIC analysis (Fig. 3A) verified that the products  
154 were the aldonic acid forms of fully acetylated chitooligosaccharides that result from cleavage of the  
155 glycosidic bond through oxidation of the C1 carbon [13]. These product profiles are essentially  
156 identical to those observed for CBP21 on the same substrates [16], and also show a lack of high DP  
157 products for  $\alpha$ -chitin compared to  $\beta$ -chitin. This has been suggested to be caused by the tighter  
158 packing of chitin chains in the  $\alpha$ -allomorph of these substrates, which prevents release of long  
159 oligosaccharides due to adhesion to the insoluble substrate [16].

160

161 Through HILIC analysis, base line separation was obtained for all soluble aldonic acids resulting  
162 from LPMO activity on  $\beta$ -chitin (Fig. 3A), enabling the estimation of relative progress curves (Fig.  
163 3B-F). The relative rate of *LmLPMO10* was similar to that of the well-characterized LPMO, CBP21  
164 [11, 13, 16, 38, 46] from *Serratia marcescens* (Fig. 3B-F). The only clear difference between the  
165 enzymes was that *LmLPMO10* gave a slightly higher abundance of low DP products (tetramer and  
166 pentamer; Fig. 3B&C) and lower abundance of the hexamer (Fig. 3D). Since the active site and  
167 putative substrate-binding residues of *LmLPMO10* are essentially identical to those of CBP21 (Fig.  
168 S1), it is reasonable to speculate that the tandem CBM5/12 module has influence on the/this product  
169 profile. The tight binding of the protein to the substrate may allow more catalytic events to take place  
170 on a limited region of the substrate, thereby yielding more products with low DP.

171

172 The presence of the tandem CBM5/12 module on *LmLPMO10* prompted investigation of the ability  
173 of this LPMO to depolymerize an amorphous substrate like colloidal chitin, a substrate not reported  
174 as substrate for chitin active LPMOs in existing literature. Indeed, activity was confirmed by a time  
175 course assay and, intriguingly, also for CBP21, which was used as a control (Fig. 4; CBP21 only  
176 contains a single LPMO10 module). Compared to activity on  $\beta$ -chitin, initial rates were lower for  
177 all products, even though a higher substrate concentration was used (7.5 mg/ml for colloidal chitin,  
178 5.0 mg/ml for  $\beta$ -chitin). This is likely due to the low crystalline and highly amorphous nature of  
179 colloidal chitin, which gives/offers fewer sites that allow productive binding of LPMOs. This is in  
180 contrast to chitinases, which are generally known to be highly efficient in degrading colloidal chitin  
181 due to its amorphous nature. Comparison of the product profiles resulting from LPMO activity on

182  $\beta$ - and colloidal chitin shows that for the latter substrate there is less dominance of even-numbered  
183 products. The dominance of even-numbered products observed in LPMO product profiles has  
184 previously been attributed to the fact that they act on substrate-crystal surfaces, where the two-fold  
185 screw axis of the polysaccharide chains mediate productive binding to only every second sugar unit  
186 [13]. Thus, the difference in the dominance of even-numbered products between  $\beta$ - and colloidal  
187 chitin may be related to the morphological differences of the two substrates.

188

#### 189 *Characterization of the listerial chitinases*

190 Sequence analysis of the *L. monocytogenes* chitinases to other well-characterized GH18 chitinases  
191 shows that ChiA closely resembles *SmChiC* from the chitin-degrading bacterium *S. marcescens*  
192 (63% sequence identity for the catalytic modules). *SmChiC* is a non-processive endo-chitinase with  
193 a shallow substrate binding cleft that cleaves chitin at random positions on the polymer chains [46-  
194 49]. The catalytic module of ChiB is similar to processive exo-chitinases like *BsChiA* from *Bacillus*  
195 *circulans* (32% sequence identity) and *SmChiB* from *S. marcescens* (30% sequence identity).  
196 Processive chitinases have deep substrate binding clefts that allow attachment to the ends of the  
197 substrate chains, followed by continuous hydrolytic processing of the chains without release of the  
198 polymer [50-52]. Functional chitinolytic systems usually contain both exo- and endo-acting  
199 chitinases, as these have complementing activities and give synergistic chitin degradation [46].  
200 Based on the sequence analysis of the *L. monocytogenes* chitinases, it is conceivable that these  
201 enzymes are part of a chitinolytic machinery.

202

203 The two *L. monocytogenes* chitinases have previously been shown to be secreted when the bacterium  
204 grows in the presence of colloidal (amorphous) chitin [5, 53]. Whereas no activity data has been  
205 published for ChiB, the enzymatic properties of ChiA towards soluble substrate analogues have been  
206 elucidated [7]. No data exist that describe the activity of these chitinases towards polymeric,  
207 insoluble chitin, which is a more realistic substrate for the enzymes to encounter *in vivo*. The  
208 activities of ChiA and ChiB were therefore evaluated using crystalline chitin as a substrate and  
209 compared to the activity of *SmChiC*. Both chitinases showed degradation rates comparable to the *S.*  
210 *marcescens* chitinase (Fig. 5; ChiA, ChiB and ChiBA produced 0.7, 0.5 and 0.2 fold the amount of  
211 (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub> compared to *SmChiC*, respectively, after 8 h of incubation), indicating that the enzymes  
212 indeed are capable of rapid chitin degradation. Previously obtained data for ChiA activity towards  
213 the substrate trimer analogue (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub>-p-Nitrophenol indicated poor substrate binding and a



214 resulting low catalytic efficiency ( $K_m=1.6$  mM,  $k_{cat}$  22 s<sup>-1</sup>; [7]). However, our results show that the  
215 hydrolysis rate of polymeric chitin is comparable to that of *SmChiC*, indicating that the estimated  
216 kinetic parameters of *ChiA* may have been misleading due to the artificial nature of the substrate  
217 used. The putatively processive *ChiB* shows a lower substrate conversion rate than the putatively  
218 non-processive *ChiA*. The substrate-binding modules of processive enzymes have been proposed to  
219 play an important role in keeping the enzymes in close proximity to the substrate [54, 55], thus  
220 facilitating hydrolysis. This hypothesis is indeed valid for *ChiB*, which shows a dramatic drop in  
221 activity when the CBM5/12 binding module is removed from the enzyme (Fig. 5C).

222

### 223 *The influence of LmLPMO10 on chitinase efficiency*

224 Since the discovery of LPMOs, several studies have documented their important contribution to  
225 biomass-degrading enzyme machineries [13, 20, 21, 41, 56]. Enzyme database surveys show that  
226 most aerobic bacteria that target recalcitrant substrates such as cellulose or chitin harbor one or more  
227 LPMOs in their genome. The *L. monocytogenes* genome is no exception, containing two chitinases  
228 with complementary processive/ non-processive activities and one LPMO10. Bacteria having  
229 similar chitinolytic systems do indeed show a synergistic interplay between the chitinases and the  
230 LPMO [11-15]. The same is observed for the *L. monocytogenes* chitinolytic system as *LmLPMO10*  
231 increases the rate of chitin depolymerization by both *ChiA* and *ChiB* (Fig. 5). Interestingly, *CBP21*  
232 boosts the activity of the chitinases more than *LmLPMO10* (Fig. 5 A&B), despite having similar  
233 relative rate compared to the *L. monocytogenes* LPMO (Fig. 3).

234

235 The chitinases seem to depolymerize chitin with an efficiency that lies in the range of chitinases  
236 (*SmChiC*) that are devoted to this role (Fig. 5A, B&D), indicating that a metabolic role can be argued  
237 for these enzymes. This also corresponds well with the fact that transcription of both *chiA* and *chiB*  
238 is induced upon exposure of *L. monocytogenes* to chitin [5] and secretion of the corresponding  
239 enzymes is increased under similar conditions (see experiments described below).

240

241 The activities of *ChiA*, *ChiB* and *SmChiC* towards chitin yield GlcNAc and (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub> as products  
242 (Fig. 6A). However, in the presence of an LPMO, ion-exclusion chromatography revealed the  
243 existence of products of higher DP in the reaction mixture (Fig. 6A). In order to resolve the nature of  
244 these products, samples were also analyzed by HILIC, revealing the presence of oligomeric native  
245 and oxidized chitooligosaccharides (Fig. 6B), albeit in substantially lower concentrations than

246 (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub>. Two possible explanations may be that the chitinases either are fully bound to the  
247 substrate, thus unable to process soluble chitooligosaccharides, or that the free chitinases are  
248 prevented from efficient hydrolysis due to non-productive binding of the oxidized  
249 chitooligosaccharides to the chitinase active site. Treatment of solubilized high DP reaction products  
250 with freshly added chitinase resulted in complete degradation of the native chitooligosaccharides, but  
251 only partial degradation of the oxidized products (Fig. 6B). It seems that ChiA and *SmChiC* are  
252 incapable of degrading (GlcNAc)<sub>1-3</sub>GlcNAc1A. ChiB shows a slightly different product profile, being  
253 only inactive towards (GlcNAc)<sub>1-2</sub>GlcNAc1A. These data indicate that the presence of oligomeric  
254 products may be the result of a combination of low concentration of free enzymes and product  
255 inhibition. The ability of ChiB to depolymerize (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub>GlcNAc1A (in contrast to ChiA and  
256 *SmChiC*) may be related to ChiB having an exo-processive function, as opposed to ChiA and *SmChiC*,  
257 which are non-processive.

258

#### 259 *Induction and expression of chitinolytic enzymes*

260 Although *L. monocytogenes* possesses chitinolytic enzymes that are capable of efficient chitin  
261 depolymerization (Fig. 5), the bacterium has not been reported to utilize chitin as a sole carbon  
262 source [8]. The only conditions where *L. monocytogenes* has been observed to actively degrade  
263 chitin is in cultivation experiments using LB medium supplemented with chitin as a polysaccharide  
264 source [5, 6, 53]. In these studies, both the *chiA* and *chiB* genes were shown to be upregulated and  
265 the expressed proteins were also identified in the culture supernatant. In the current study, we re-  
266 examined these conditions using both colloidal chitin and  $\beta$ -chitin as substrates and investigated the  
267 transcript abundance of the *LmLMPO10A* gene (*lmo2467*) as well as the presence of *LmLMPO10A*  
268 and the chitinases in the culture supernatant.

269

270 The presence of chitin appeared to marginally increase transcription of *lmo2467* in the stationary  
271 phase (~2-fold; Fig. 7). However, compared to the abundant up-regulation observed for the chitinase  
272 genes (>17-fold for *chiB*; [5, 53]), induction of *lmo2467* does not seem to be part of a response to  
273 growth on chitin as a carbon source. To exclude that induction of *lmo2467* necessitates chitin of  
274 crystalline structure, we carried out transcript abundance analysis using  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -chitin instead of  
275 colloidal chitin. Addition of  $\alpha$ -chitin particles did not influence transcription of *lmo2467* (results not  
276 shown). Addition of  $\beta$ -chitin particles lead to partial RNA degradation in the samples, for unknown  
277 reasons, and therefore quantitative comparison was not possible.

278

279 Identification of chitin binding proteins secreted by *L. monocytogenes* during growth in media with  
280 and without chitin was achieved using a chitin bead pull-down assay. Both ChiB and ChiA were  
281 identified in the supernatant when the bacterium was grown in the presence of chitin (Fig. 8; proteins  
282 were identified by trypsination and MALDI-TOF MS or by comparison with the profiles of isogenic  
283 deletion mutants as described in [53]). *LmLPMO10*, on the other hand, could not be detected by  
284 MALDI-TOF MS (or SDS-PAGE) in any of the conditions analyzed. The highest abundance of the  
285 chitinases was observed when the bacterium was grown in the presence of  $\beta$ -chitin. A third prominent  
286 protein (~65 kDa) observed in all conditions was by MALDI TOF MS identified to be the virulence  
287 factor p60 (Uniprot ID: P21171), whose affinity towards chitin most likely stems from its two LysM  
288 (CBM50) modules that are generally known for chitin-binding properties [57]. Whether this protein  
289 is involved in chitin degradation is unknown, but existing literature has shown this protein to be an  
290 autolysin that participates in cell division and hydrolysis of peptidoglycan [58-60].

291

292 In order to identify proteins secreted by *L. monocytogenes* that were below the threshold of detection  
293 by SDS-PAGE and subsequent MALDI-TOF MS analysis (see above), a more comprehensive and  
294 highly resolved analysis was obtained by Orbitrap LC-MS. ChiA and ChiB were identified in the  
295 stationary phase in the presence and absence of chitin, whereas *LmLPMO10* only in the absence of  
296 chitin (Table 1). The strong binding of *LmLPMO10* to chitin (Fig. 2A) may have prevented its  
297 identification in the supernatant from the chitin-containing samples. None of the three enzymes were  
298 detected in the mid-exponential phase in any of the conditions.

299

300 All in all the chitin pull-down assay, northern blot and secretome analysis results indicate that the  
301 presence of either crystalline chitin or amorphous chitin (both excellent substrates for all three  
302 enzymes) initiates a markedly higher level of secretion for both ChiA and ChiB, but not  
303 *LmLPMO10*. This is in agreement with the fact that deletion of the *LmLPMO10* gene (*Imo2467*)  
304 does not impair chitin hydrolysis during growth of *L. monocytogenes* in solid medium containing  
305 chitin [6] and may indicate that *LmLPMO10* is not part of the *L. monocytogenes* chitinolytic system.  
306 On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the activity of ChiA has also been deemed important  
307 for *L. monocytogenes* host colonization [33]. It is thus plausible that ChiA is a bi-functional enzyme.

308

309 *Conclusions*

310 The *L. monocytogenes* chitinolytic system appears to be fully functional and can likely be utilized  
311 by the bacterium to exploit chitin as a source of carbon and nitrogen. Secretome analysis clearly  
312 shows that the chitinases are expressed during stationary phase and with increased abundance when  
313 chitin is present as a carbon source. We importantly show that the *L. monocytogenes* LPMO is an  
314 active enzyme. Although *LmLPMO10* shows activity on chitin and also acts in synergy with the *L.*  
315 *monocytogenes* chitinases, our secretome and transcriptional data indicate that the role of this  
316 enzyme may be uncoupled from the chitinases. Evidence from the literature points towards a  
317 possible alternative role in virulence, but the exact mechanism of action in such a case remains  
318 unclear.  
319

320 **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

321

322 *Bacterial strains and culturing conditions*

323 *Listeria monocytogenes* EGD-e was kindly provided by Dr. W. Goebel (Biozentrum, University of  
324 Würzburg, Germany).

325

326 For analysis of secreted proteins, *L. monocytogenes* EGD-e was cultured aerobically at 30°C in 50  
327 ml LB medium containing 3.3 g/L colloidal chitin, 10 g/L  $\beta$ -chitin or no additional carbon source  
328 (control). For the chitin pull-down assay (described below), cultures were grown overnight prior to  
329 analysis. For Orbitrap LC-MS analysis (described below), cultures were grown to OD<sub>600</sub> 0.7  
330 (exponential phase) and OD<sub>600</sub> 1.2 (stationary phase) before harvesting. At the appropriate time/ OD,  
331 cultures were centrifuged for 10 min at 6000 g in order to sediment cells and remaining chitin  
332 particles. Subsequently, culture supernatants were sterile filtered and subjected to the chitin pull-  
333 down assay or the MALDI-TOF MS and Orbitrap LC-MS analysis.

334

335 *Cloning of lmo0105 (ChiB) and lmo2467 (LmLPMO10)*

336 Chromosomal DNA was obtained from overnight-grown *L. monocytogenes* EGD-e using the DNeasy  
337 blood and tissue kit (Qiagen). The genes *lmo0105* (Genebank ID: CAC98320.1; protein name  
338 proposed in this study; ChiB) and *lmo2467* (Genebank ID: CAD00545.1, protein name proposed in  
339 this study; LmLPMO10) were amplified from genomic DNA using the forward and reverse primer  
340 pairs listed in Table 2. A truncated variant of ChiB lacking the C-terminal CBM 5/12 module  
341 (corresponding to amino acid residues 711-755) was made using the wild-type gene forward primer  
342 and a reverse primer entering a stop codon at amino acid position 710. The truncated ChiB variant  
343 was named “ChiB $\Delta$ ”.

344

345 The amplified gene products were cloned into the pET-46 Ek / LIC vector using the ligation-  
346 independent cloning kit (Novagen). The vector controls gene expression by a T7 promoter and  
347 includes an N-terminal hexa-histidine tag separated from the target gene by a sequence encoding an  
348 enterokinase (Ek) cleavage site. The position of the Ek site allows removal of the hexa-histidine tag  
349 with the Enterokinase protease, leaving no non-native amino acids on the target protein. The integrity  
350 of the gene constructs was confirmed by sequencing (Macrogen, Korea). Finally, all constructs were  
351 transformed into *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) for protein expression.

352

353 The second *L. monocytogenes* chitinase (ChiA, GenBank ID: CAC99961.1) was also included in this  
354 study. The cloning of this gene has been described previously [7].

355

#### 356 *Protein expression and purification*

357 *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) strains containing the expression vectors encoding ChiA, ChiB and ChiB $\Delta$  were  
358 grown in LB supplemented with 100  $\mu$ g/mL carbenicillin at 30°C to an OD<sub>600</sub> of 0.4, at which point  
359 protein expression was induced by addition of isopropyl  $\beta$ -D-1-thiogalactopyranoside (IPTG) to a  
360 final concentration of 1 mM. Following overnight incubation, the cells were harvested by  
361 centrifugation and resuspended in 20 mM MOPS, pH 7.2, containing 0.5 M NaCl and 5 mM  
362 imidazole. Cells were disrupted with the aid of a Constant Systems cell disruptor at 4°C at a pressure  
363 of 1.36 Kbar. The lysate was centrifuged at 4°C for 1.5 h at 48.000 g and the filtered supernatant was  
364 applied to a 1 mL Ni-NTA agarose column (Qiagen) operated by a peristaltic pump with a flow rate  
365 of 1.0 mL/min at 4 °C. The column was washed with 100 mL of 20 mM MOPS, pH 7.2, containing  
366 0.5 M NaCl and 5 mM imidazole, and proteins were eluted in 100 mM MOPS, pH 7.8, containing  
367 0.5 M NaCl and 0.5 M imidazole. The eluates were dialyzed against 50 mM sodium phosphate buffer,  
368 pH 6.0, at 4°C and concentrated in a Vivaspin (GE Healthcare) with a cutoff of 30 and 10 kDa for  
369 ChiB and ChiA, respectively.

370

371 For purification of *L. monocytogenes* LmLPMO10, the *E. coli* BL21 (DE3) strain was grown in LB  
372 supplemented with 100  $\mu$ g/mL ampicillin at 37°C to an OD<sub>600</sub> of 0.4, followed by addition of IPTG  
373 to a final concentration of 1 mM for induction of protein expression. Incubation of the induced cells  
374 was continued for 4 h followed by cell-harvesting by centrifugation. The cell pellet was resuspended  
375 in 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, containing 20 mM imidazole, followed by cell disruption with a  
376 sonication probe adjusted to 27% intensity and a sonication cycle of 0.5 s on 0.5 s off for 30 seconds,  
377 using a Vibra cell Ultrasonic Processor (Sonics, Newton, CT, USA). The cells were kept on ice at all  
378 times. The lysate was centrifuged for 10 min at 30000 g at 4°C and the resulting supernatant was  
379 filtered using a 0.2 micron sterile filter (Millipore). Using an Äkta Purifier (GE Healthcare) protein  
380 purification system, the filtrate was applied on a 5 mL Ni-NTA agarose column (Qiagen) equilibrated  
381 with binding buffer (50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0, 20 mM imidazole) at a flow rate of 1 mL/min. His-  
382 tagged protein bound to the column was eluted with 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0 containing 0.5 M  
383 imidazole, collected and concentrated using an Amicon Ultra-centrifugal filter unit with a 10 kDa

384 cutoff (Millipore). The same centrifugal device was used to exchange the elution buffer to 50 mM  
385 Tris-HCl, pH 8.0. The Hexa-histidine tag was removed by adding 0.5 units EKMax<sup>TM</sup> enterokinase  
386 (Life Technologies) per mg His-tagged protein in 1 mL reactions containing 50 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0  
387 and 1 mM CaCl<sub>2</sub>. After incubation for 16 h at 37°C, the reaction mixture was applied on a Ni-NTA  
388 column equilibrated with 50 mM Tris-HCl, pH 8.0 as binding buffer, in order to isolate the uncleaved  
389 proteins and the free hexa-histidine tags. The flow-through, containing the native form of  
390 *LmLPMO10* and the EKMax<sup>TM</sup> enterokinase, was concentrated using an Amicon Ultra centrifugal  
391 filter unit and applied on a Superdex 75 HiLoad 16/60 (GE Healthcare) size exclusion  
392 chromatography (SEC) column operated by an Äkta Purifier in order to separate the two proteins  
393 (*LmLPMO10*~50 kDa, EKMax<sup>TM</sup>~22 kDa). The running buffer was composed of 50 mM Tris pH 8  
394 and was applied at a flow rate of 0.5 mL/min. The fraction containing *LmLPMO10* was collected,  
395 sterile filtered using a 0.2 micron filter, concentrated to approximately 2.0 mg/mL with an ultra-  
396 centrifugal filter unit with a 10 kDa cutoff (Millipore) and stored at 4°C until use.

397

398 CBP21 and *SmChiC* were expressed and purified as previously described by Vaaje-Kolstad *et al.* [38]  
399 and Synstad *et al.* [48], respectively,

400

#### 401 *Cu(II) saturation of LPMOs*

402 Before use in activity assays, *LmLPMO10* and CBP21 were saturated with Cu(II) according to the  
403 protocol described by Loose *et al.* [25]. Briefly, the enzymes were incubated for 30 minutes at room  
404 temperature with Cu(II)SO<sub>4</sub> at a 1:3 molar ratio (enzyme:copper). After saturation, the enzymes were  
405 run through a PD MidiTrap G-25 (GE Healthcare) desalting column using 20 mM Tris HCl pH 8.0  
406 as running buffer to remove excess Cu(II)SO<sub>4</sub>.

407

#### 408 *Preparation of chitin substrates*

409 Colloidal chitin was prepared by stirring 5 g shrimp shell  $\alpha$ -chitin particles (C9213, Sigma-Aldrich)  
410 overnight in 50 ml 36-38% HCl. Following this treatment, the pH was adjusted to ~8 by addition of  
411 NaOH. In order to wash the chitin, the suspension was pelleted by centrifugation followed by  
412 decanting of the supernatant and resuspension of the chitin in MilliQ water. The washing step was  
413 repeated seven times and the pure colloidal chitin pellet was stored at 4°C until use. Pure  $\beta$ -chitin  
414 particles were purchased from France Chitin (Orange, France) and was also used to generate the  $\beta$ -  
415 chitin nano-fibres according to the protocol described by Fan *et al.* [61]. In short, 75 mg  $\beta$ -chitin was

416 suspended in 1.8 mM acetic acid to a final concentration of 10 mg/mL and sonicated at 35% amplitude  
417 for 4 minutes, using a Vibra Cell Ultrasonic Processor (Sonics). For enzyme reactions, all chitin  
418 variants were used in concentrations high enough to ensure substrate saturation, but at the same time  
419 enabling appropriate mixing and pipetting.

420

#### 421 *Chitin-binding assays*

422 Binding of *LmLPMO10* was assayed in 100  $\mu$ L reactions containing 10 mg/mL of substrate ( $\alpha$ -chitin  
423 (Chitinor, Norway),  $\beta$ -chitin (France Chitin) or Avicel cellulose (Sigma)) and 0.2 mg/mL purified  
424 *LmLPMO10* in 20 mM Bis-Tris pH 6.3. Control reactions were identical, but contained no substrate.  
425 The reactions were incubated at 37°C for 3 h. Subsequently, the substrate was sedimented by  
426 centrifugation at 16000 g for 5 min. The supernatant (containing the non-bound protein) was decanted  
427 off and kept on ice until analysis. The pellet was washed twice with 1 mL buffer (20 mM Bis-Tris pH  
428 6.3), followed by resuspension in 50  $\mu$ L SDS-PAGE sample buffer (Invitrogen) and 10 min  
429 incubation at 99°C. 7.5  $\mu$ L of supernatant and 15  $\mu$ L of the proteins that had remained bound to the  
430 pellets were analyzed using SDS-PAGE Mini-Protean Stain-free 10% gels (Bio-Rad).

431

#### 432 *LPMO and chitinase activity assays*

433 Enzyme activity assays were conducted by incubating 10 mg/mL  $\beta$ -chitin or  $\alpha$ -chitin with 0.1  $\mu$ M  
434 chitinase in 500  $\mu$ L reactions buffered by 50 mM Bis-Tris pH 6.0, in the presence or absence of 1.0  
435  $\mu$ M LPMO. 1.0 mM ascorbate was included as an external electron donor in all assays. Assays  
436 determining LPMO activity were conducted by incubating 5 mg/mL sonicated  $\beta$ -chitin (chitin nano-  
437 fibrils) or 7.5 mg/mL colloidal chitin with 1.0  $\mu$ M LPMO in 500  $\mu$ L reactions buffered by 50 mM  
438 Tris pH 8.0 and 1.0 mM ascorbate. Reactions were incubated vertically at 37°C in an Eppendorf  
439 Thermomixer shaking continuously at 1000 rpm. Samples of the reaction mixtures were taken at  
440 regular intervals for determination of product profiles and quantities. LPMO reactions were stopped  
441 by separating the insoluble substrate from the products by filtration using a 96-well filter plate  
442 (Millipore) operated by a Millipore vacuum manifold. Chitinase reactions were stopped by boiling  
443 for 10 min, followed by the filtration procedure described above. Soluble products formed by LPMO  
444 activity were analyzed qualitatively by MALDI-TOF MS and quantitatively (and qualitatively) by  
445 hydrophilic interaction chromatography (HILIC) using an Agilent Technologies 1290 Infinity  
446 equipped with an Acquity UPLC BEH Amide 150 mm column. The specific details of both protocols  
447 have been published previously [13]. In short, MALDI-TOF MS was conducted by mixing 1  $\mu$ L



448 sample with 2  $\mu$ L 9 mg/mL 2,5-dihydroxybenzoic acid (DHB) in 30 % Acetonitrile on a MTP 384  
449 target plate (Bruker Daltonics), followed by drying and analysis with an Ultraflex MALDI-TOF/TOF  
450 instrument (Bruker Daltonics GmbH) operated in positive mode. Separation of the oxidized  
451 chitooligosaccharides by HILIC was accomplished by running a linear gradient running from 74% to  
452 62% acetonitrile/15 mM Tris-HCL, pH 8.0. Products were detected by monitoring absorption at 205  
453 nm. Standards of chitooligosaccharide aldonic acids ranging in DP from 1 to 6 were generated  
454 according to the protocol described in [25].

455

456 Quantification of the dominant product from the chitinase reactions ((GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub>; represents >75% of  
457 the total products formed) was achieved by ion-affinity chromatography, using a Dionex Ultimate  
458 3000 UPLC system equipped with a Rezex column heated to 80°C, using 5 mM H<sub>2</sub>SO<sub>4</sub> as the mobile  
459 phase at 1.0 mL/min. Chitooligosaccharides were separated by isocratic chromatography and detected  
460 by monitoring absorption at 194 nm. Standards were run regularly to ensure precise quantification of  
461 the analytes.

462

463 *Identification of chitinolytic proteins in L. monocytogenes culture supernatants (pull down assay)*

464 10 mL of sterile-filtered supernatants acquired from ON-grown *L. monocytogenes* cultures was mixed  
465 with 50-70  $\mu$ L magnetic chitin beads and incubated overnight at 200 rpm and 30°C to allow binding  
466 of proteins with affinity to the beads. Thereafter, the beads were separated with the use of a magnet  
467 and washed twice with 1 mL 50 mM Tris-HCl pH 8.0. In order to release proteins bound to the chitin  
468 beads, 20  $\mu$ L SDS-PAGE sample buffer was added and the suspension was incubated for 10 min at  
469 99°C. The samples were loaded on a 10% SDS-PAGE gel (Invitrogen) for protein separation. SDS-  
470 PAGE gels were stained with SYPRO Ruby or SimpleBlue Safestain (Invitrogen) following the  
471 manufacturer's instructions.

472

473 *Protein identification by MALDI-TOF MS*

474 Proteins of interest identified from the chitin pull-down assay by SDS-PAGE (see above) were  
475 analyzed by MALDI-TOF MS. Sample preparation and identification was carried out as described in  
476 Berner *et al.* (2013), with a modified protocol. The modification entailed inclusion of a reduction and  
477 alkylation step after dehydration, involving incubation with 10 mM DTT at 56°C for 45 min, followed  
478 by addition of 55 mM iodoacetamine and incubation in the dark at room temperature for 30 min.

479 Peptides identified were analyzed using the MASCOT software suite equipped with the NCBI  
480 prokaryotic genomes database as a search database.

481

#### 482 *Protein identification by Orbitrap LC-MS*

483 Supernatants obtained from *L. monocytogenes* cultures were transferred to centrifugal ultrafiltration  
484 units with a 10 kDa cutoff (Millipore) and centrifuged for 14 min at 4500 g to concentrate proteins in  
485 the sample. Next, samples were diluted 10-fold in 50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.5, followed by re-  
486 concentration in order to remove salts and other small MW medium components. The desalting  
487 procedure was repeated six times and samples were stored at -20°C until further analysis.

488

489 Proteins were prepared for trypsination by adjusting 20 µL of each sample to 50 mM NH<sub>4</sub>HCO<sub>3</sub> and  
490 10 mM DTT, followed by incubation at 56°C for 30 min. After cooling down to room temperature,  
491 samples were adjusted to 50 mM iodoacetamide followed by 30 min incubation in the dark, addition  
492 of DTT to 50 mM and incubation for 15 min at room temperature. For proteolytic digestion, 2.5 µL  
493 immobilized trypsin (Poroszyme, Life Technologies) was equilibrated using 25 mM NH<sub>4</sub>HCO<sub>3</sub>/ 5 %  
494 acetonitrile, followed by application of the protein solution. The resulting peptides were collected by  
495 a C18 membrane (Empore) that was conditioned with MeOH<sub>absolut</sub> and equilibrated with NH<sub>4</sub>HCO<sub>3</sub>/5  
496 % acetonitrile prior to use. The bound peptides were washed twice with 10 µL 0.1 % TFA and eluted  
497 with 5 µL 70 % acetonitrile/ 0.1 % TFA. The eluent was dried using a vacuum centrifuge.

498

499 Orbitrap LC-MS was carried out using a QExactive/Ultimate 3000 RSLCnano (ThermoFisher) setup,  
500 and was performed as follows: the dried peptides were dissolved in loading solution (0.05 %TFA,  
501 2% ACN in water), loaded onto a trap column (Acclaim PepMap100, C18, 5 µm, 100 Å, 300 µm i.d.  
502 x 5 mm) and then backflushed onto a 50 cm x 75 µm analytical column (Acclaim PepMap RSLC  
503 C18, 2 µm, 100 Å, 75 µm i.d. x 50 cm, nanoViper). A 90 min gradient from 4 to 40 % solution B (80  
504 % ACN, 0.1% formic acid) was used for separation of the peptides, at a flow rate of 300 nL/min. The  
505 Q-Exactive mass spectrometer was set up as follows (Top10 method): a full scan (300-1600 m/z) at  
506 R=70.000 was followed by (up to) 10 MS<sub>2</sub> scans at R=35000, using an NCE setting of 28. Singly  
507 charged precursors were excluded for MSMS, as were precursors with z>5. Dynamic exclusion was  
508 set to 20 seconds. Raw files were converted to mgf format using the msconvert module of  
509 ProteoWizard (<http://proteowizard.sourceforge.net/>). The resulting mgf files were submitted to  
510 database search (automatic decoy option) against the *L. monocytogenes* EGD-e database (downloaded

511 from UniprotKB) on an in-house Mascot (v.2.4) server using 10 ppm/ 20mamu tolerance for MS and  
512 MS/MS, respectively, and allowing for up to 2 miscleavages. Carbamidomethylated cysteine and  
513 oxidized methionine were selected as fixed and variable modifications, respectively.

514

515 *RNA extraction and Northern blot analysis*

516 Bacterial cultures intended for transcriptional analysis were grown aerobically in LB at 30°C with  
517 shaking at 190 rpm overnight. Subsequently, the cultures were diluted to an OD<sub>600</sub> of 0.05 in 30 mL  
518 of LB supplemented with 0.05% glucose, and thereafter grown at 30°C with shaking at 190 rpm until  
519 late-exponential phase (OD<sub>600</sub> = 0.7). At this point 15 mL of each culture was transferred to new  
520 sterile flasks containing either colloidal chitin,  $\alpha$ -chitin,  $\beta$ -chitin or water (control for  $\beta$ -chitin), to  
521 reach a final concentration of 3.3 g/L for the colloidal and  $\alpha$ -chitin (C9213, Sigma-Aldrich) and 1.33  
522 g/L for the  $\beta$ -chitin. Both induced and uninduced cultures were incubated further at 30°C with shaking  
523 and samples for RNA extraction were harvested after 15 min and 2 h, corresponding to late  
524 exponential and stationary phase, respectively. RNA extraction and Northern blot analysis were  
525 carried out as described previously by Larsen *et al.* [5] using the primer pair lmo2467P\_F:  
526 CGACAAATTTAGCAGCGACA and lmo2467P\_R: CCGATTTCCAGGTGTTTCAGT for the  
527 amplification of the DNA probe.

528

529

530

531

532

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540

541 **AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS**

542 D.K.P: Planned experiments, performed experiments, analyzed data, wrote the paper. J.S.M.L.:  
543 Planned experiments, performed experiments, analyzed data, wrote the paper. M.H.L.: Planned  
544 experiments, analyzed data, wrote the paper. G.V-K: Planned experiments, analyzed data, wrote the  
545 paper.  
546

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732

733

734 **TABLES**

735

736 Table 1. Chitinolytic enzymes identified in the culture supernatants of *L. monocytogenes* grown to  
 737 stationary phase by Orbitrap LC-MS. No chitinolytic enzymes could be detected in the mid-  
 738 exponential phase.

Medium	Protein (UniProt ID)	Id. probability	Unique peptides	Unique spectra	Sequence coverage
LB	ChiA (Q8Y619)	100 %	10	12	36%
LB+β-chitin	ChiA (Q8Y619)	100 %	11	14	39%
LB+ colloidal chitin	ChiA (Q8Y619)	100 %	16	23	55%
LB	ChiB (Q8YAL3)	100 %	10	11	18%
LB+β-chitin	ChiB (Q8YAL3)	100 %	11	12	21%
LB+ colloidal chitin	ChiB (Q8YAL3)	100 %	16	19	32%
LB	<i>LmLPMO10</i> (Q8Y4H4)	100%	5	6	15%
LB+β-chitin	<i>LmLPMO10</i> (Q8Y4H4)	Not detected	-	-	-
LB+ colloidal chitin	<i>LmLPMO10</i> (Q8Y4H4)	Not detected	-	-	-

739

740

741 Table 2. Primers used for cloning *chiB* and *lmo2467*. Primer sequences are shown from 5' to 3'.

Gene	Protein	Primer	Sequence
<i>lmo0105</i>	ChiB	<i>lmo0105_F</i>	GACGACGACAAGGAGCCAAAACGGGCGAAAG
		<i>lmo0105_R</i>	GAGGAGAAGCCCGGTTTAATTTATTAACAACCAAG
		<i>lmo0105_ΔCBM_R</i>	GAGGAGAAGCCCGGTTTATGCTGGTGGTGTGCGCGTC
<i>lmo2467</i>	<i>LmLPMO10</i>	<i>lmo2467_F</i>	GACGACGACAAGCATGGATACATATCAAAACCG
		<i>lmo2467_R</i>	GAGGAGAAGCCCGGTTTAATTTAATAATGTCCAAATG

742

743

744 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

745 **Figure 1.** Catalytic activities of the *L. monocytogenes* chitin-degrading enzymes and their domain  
746 structures. (A) Reactions catalyzed by chitin-cleaving GH18s (hydrolysis of the glycosidic bond)  
747 and LPMO10s (lytic oxidation of the glycosidic bond). The end-products resulting from chitin  
748 hydrolysis by GH18 are (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub> and GlcNAc. The soluble end-products observed from chitin  
749 oxidation by LPMO10s are chitooligosaccharide aldonic acids, (GlcNAc)<sub>n</sub>GlcNAc1A, where “n”  
750 ranges from 1 to approximately 11. (B) The *L. monocytogenes* genome contains three putative  
751 chitinolytic enzymes, two family GH18 chitinases (ChiA, ChiB) and one family AA10 LPMO  
752 (*LmLPMO10A*). The size of the rectangles representing the individual domains is not  
753 related/indicative of/scaled to domain size (number of amino acids).

754  
755 **Figure 2.** Substrate-binding of *LmLPMO10* and characterization of its LPMO activity. (A) The  
756 amount of *LmLPMO10* (0.2 mg/ml) bound to 10 mg/ml α-chitin (α), β-chitin (β), and cellulose (cel)  
757 in 20 mM Bis-Tris pH 6.3 is depicted in comparison to the non-bound protein remaining in the  
758 supernatant after 3h of incubation with the substrates at 37°C. NC refers to the control sample with  
759 no substrate. The faint band observed in the (NC) indicates that *LmLPMO10* binds the inner walls of  
760 the test tube (protein precipitation was not observed). Results were reproduced in at least two  
761 independent experiments. (B) Product profiles generated by the activity of 1.0 μM *LmLPMO10* (A)  
762 towards 10 mg/ml α-chitin or 5 mg/ml β-chitin nano-fibers were identified by MALDI-TOF MS. All  
763 reactions were performed in 20 mM Bis-Tris pH 6.3, incubated at 37°C, using 1.0 mM ascorbic acid  
764 as electron donor. Each chitooligosaccharide aldonic acid product was identified by two masses  
765 representing the [M+Na<sup>+</sup>] and [M+K<sup>+</sup>] adducts. The masses observed were 869.1/ 885.1 (DP<sub>4ox</sub>),  
766 1072.2/ 1088.2 (DP<sub>5ox</sub>), 1275.2/ 1291.2 (DP<sub>6ox</sub>), 1478.3/ 1494.3 (DP<sub>7ox</sub>) and 1681.4/ 1697.4 (DP<sub>8ox</sub>).  
767 DP<sub>n<sub>ox</sub></sub> indicates the degree of polymerization (DP) of the C1 oxidized chitooligosaccharide (e.g.  
768 DP<sub>6ox</sub> refers to (GlcNAc)<sub>5</sub>GlcNAc1A, where GlcNAc1A is the aldonic acid form of GlcNAc). The  
769 experiment was repeated multiple times with essentially identical outcomes.

770  
771 **Figure 3.** Separation and relative quantification of oxidized chitooligosaccharides from β-chitin  
772 nano-fibers. (A) HILIC chromatogram representing products generated by incubation of 1.0 μM  
773 *LmLPMO10* with 5 mg/ml β-chitin nano-fibers in 50 mM Bis-Tris pH 8.0, incubated for 3 h at 37°C  
774 using 1.0 mM ascorbic acid as electron donor. The identities of the oligosaccharides were determined  
775 by peak fractionation and concomitant MALDI-TOF MS. The chromatogram was obtained by

776 recording absorption at 195 nm. The relative rates of 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  *LmLPMO10* (squares on complete line)  
777 and CBP21 (diamonds on dashed line) towards  $\beta$ -chitin nano-fibers (same conditions as described  
778 for the panel A experiment) are shown as the increase of DP4<sub>ox</sub> (B), DP5<sub>ox</sub> (C), DP6<sub>ox</sub> (D), DP7<sub>ox</sub> (E)  
779 and DP8<sub>ox</sub> (F) over time. Standard deviation is represented by error bars (n=3), which are mostly  
780 hidden by the data point symbols.

781

782 **Figure 4.** Separation and relative quantification of oxidized chitoooligosaccharides from colloidal  
783 chitin. (A) Profile of products generated by 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  *LmLPMO10* incubated with 7.5 mg/mL colloidal  
784 chitin and 1.0 mM ascorbate for 100 min at 37°C analyzed by HILIC and obtained by recording  
785 absorption at 195 nm. The relative rates of 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  *LmLPMO10* (squares on complete line) and 1.0  
786  $\mu\text{M}$  CBP21 (diamonds on dashed line) towards colloidal chitin (reaction conditions stated above)  
787 are shown as the generation of DP4<sub>ox</sub> (B), DP5<sub>ox</sub> (C), DP6<sub>ox</sub> (D), DP7<sub>ox</sub> (E) and DP8<sub>ox</sub> (F) over time.  
788 Standard deviation is represented by error bars (n=3), which are mostly hidden by the data point  
789 symbols.

790

791 **Figure 5.** Degradation of  $\beta$ -chitin by chitinases in the presence or absence of LPMOs. The  
792 accumulation of the dominant product, (GlcNAc)<sub>2</sub>, released from the enzymatic depolymerization  
793 of 10 mg/mL  $\beta$ -chitin by 0.1  $\mu\text{M}$  ChiA (A), ChiB (B) and ChiB $\Delta$  (ChiB lacking the chitin binding  
794 modules; C) in 50 mM Bis-Tris pH 6.0 was quantified in the absence (dashed line on diamonds) or  
795 presence of 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  *LmLMPO10A* (dotted line on rectangles) or 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  CBP21 (full line on  
796 triangles). For comparison the same reaction was conducted and analyzed for *SmChiC* (D) in the  
797 absence (dashed line on diamonds) or presence of CBP21 (full line on rectangles) or *LmLMPO10A*  
798 (dotted line on rectangles). Error bars indicate standard deviation (n=3). Some error bars are  
799 concealed by the data point symbols.

800

801 **Figure 6.** Analysis of reaction products from chitin degradation experiments. (A) Soluble products  
802 from reactions containing 10 mg/mL  $\beta$ -chitin, 0.1  $\mu\text{M}$  ChiA, ChiB or *SmChiC* in 50 mM Bis-Tris  
803 pH 6.0 incubated at 37°C for 8 h in the presence or absence of 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$  *LmLPMO10* or 1.0  $\mu\text{M}$   
804 CBP21. Ascorbic acid (1.0 mM) was used as electron donor for the LPMOs and analysis was done  
805 using ion-affinity chromatography. Native and oxidized chitoooligosaccharides unresolved by this  
806 chromatographic method are annotated by “Olig”. (B) Samples shown in panel A containing the  
807 chitinases and CBP21 analyzed by HILIC. The reactions represented by each chromatogram are

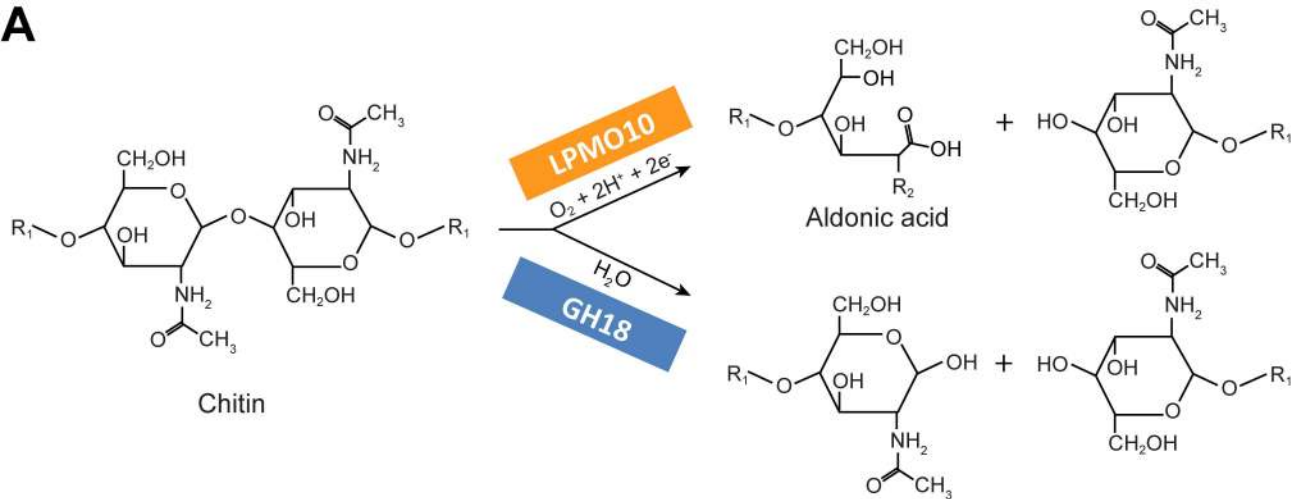
808 indicated by the names of the enzymes. Reactions where solubilized native and oxidized  
809 chitooligosaccharides have been re-treated with 0.2  $\mu$ M chitinase for 16 h at 37°C (to completely  
810 solubilize all hydrolysable products) are labelled with the name of the enzyme used in bold. The top  
811 and bottom chromatograms represent standards of native chitooligosaccharides ((GlcNAc)<sub>1-6</sub>) and  
812 chitooligosaccharide aldonic acids (GlcNAc1A and (GlcNAc)<sub>1-5</sub>GlcNAc1A ), respectively. The  
813 HILIC method separates the  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ - anomers of the native chitooligosaccharides (labelled “ $\alpha$ ”  
814 and “ $\beta$ ”). A blank run has been subtracted from all chromatograms (baseline subtraction) in order to  
815 improve clarity. The peak labelled “Artefact” is an artefact caused by the base line subtraction and  
816 does not represent an analyte.

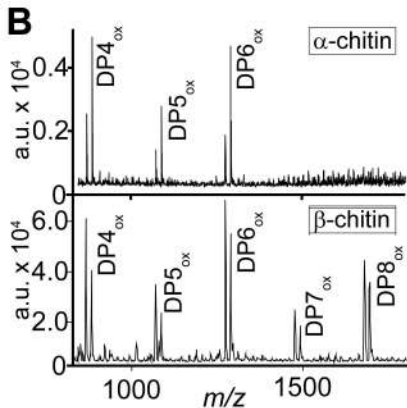
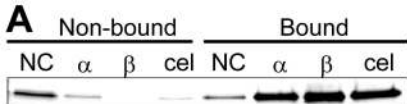
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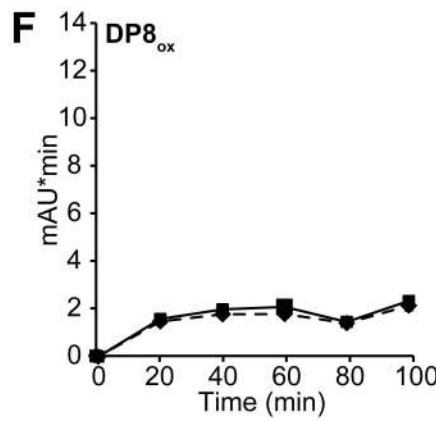
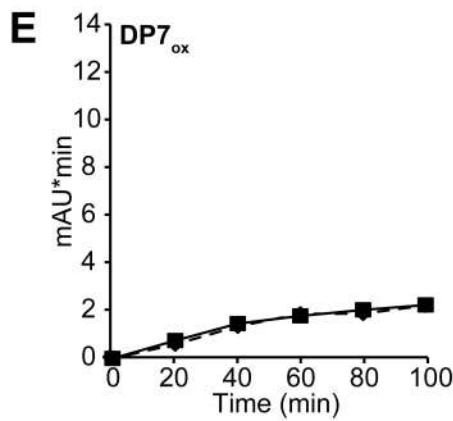
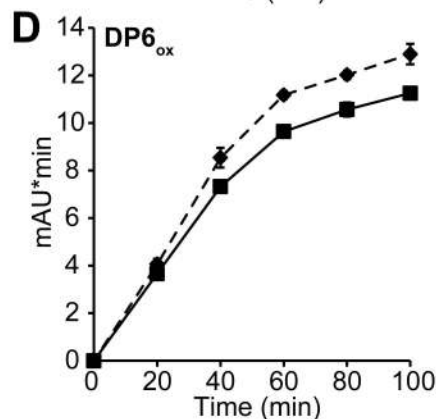
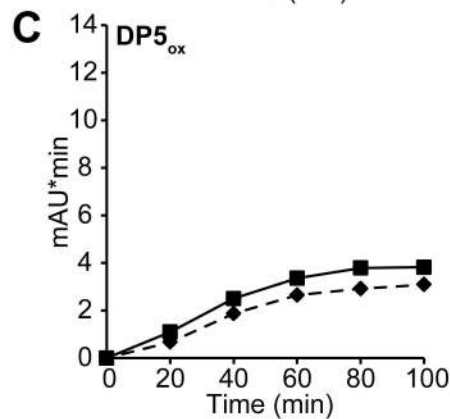
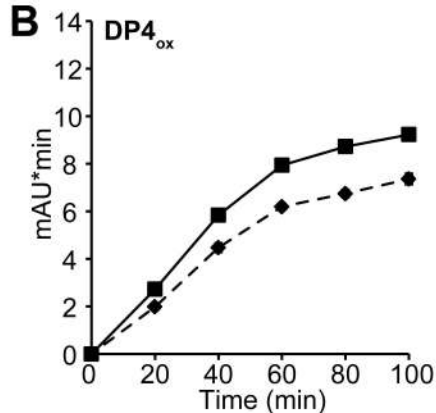
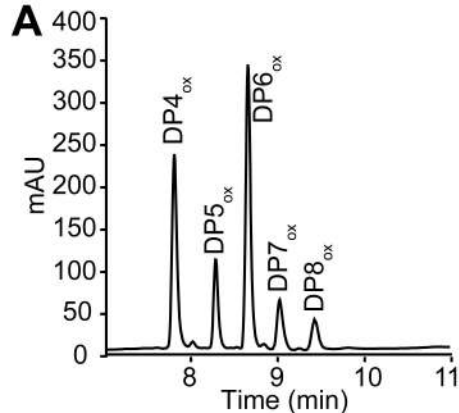
818 **Figure 7.** Northern blot analysis of *lmo2467* transcription. Cells were grown in LB supplemented  
819 with 0.05% glucose at 30°C and induced by the addition of colloidal chitin. Samples were collected  
820 from medium with and without chitin 15 min and 2 h after addition, corresponding to late exponential  
821 and stationary phases of growth, respectively. The numbers above the bands show the relative levels  
822 of transcripts compared to the sample without chitin in late exponential phase (far left). The 16S and  
823 23S bands serving as a loading control are shown below the corresponding bands. The results were  
824 reproduced in three independent experiments.

825

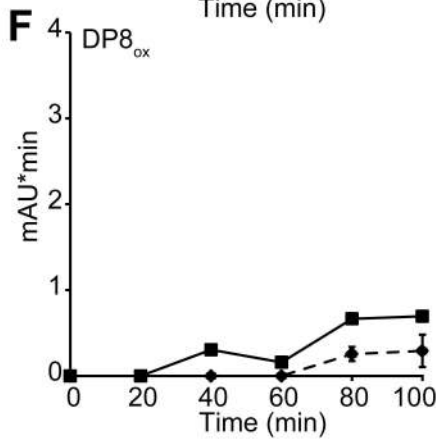
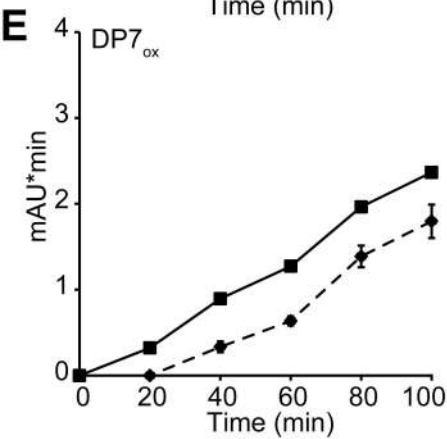
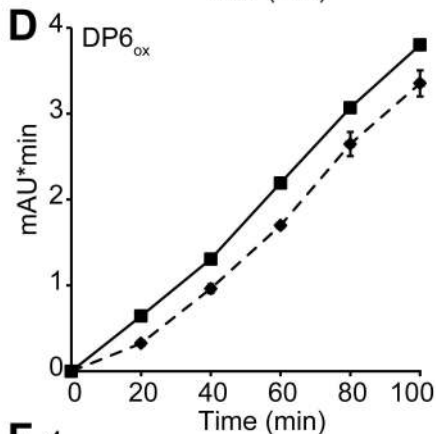
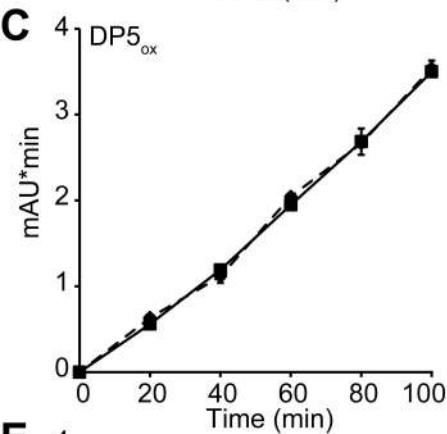
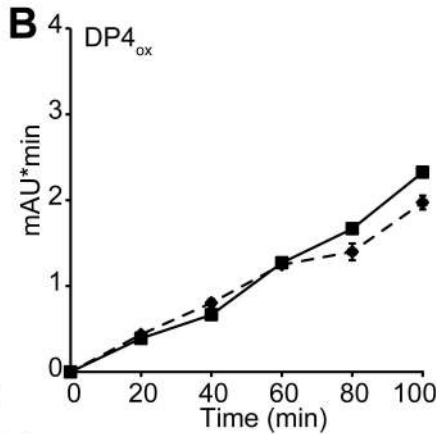
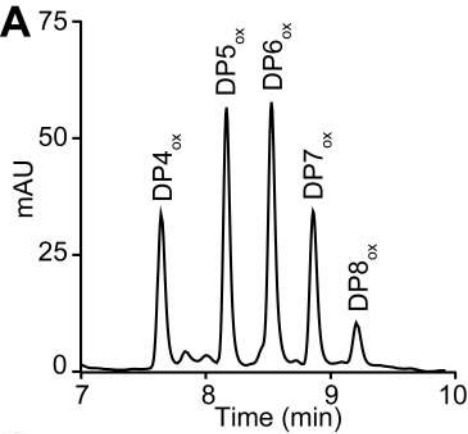
826 **Figure 8.** Analysis of proteins with affinity to chitin secreted by *L. monocytogenes*. (A) Supernatants  
827 from cultures grown overnight at 30°C in plain LB (lane 1) or in LB supplemented with either  
828 colloidal chitin (lane 2) or  $\beta$ -chitin (lane 3). Arrows show the positions of identified bands. (B) SDS-  
829 PAGE analysis of purified *LmLPMO10*. The dotted arrow marks the expected position on the SDS-  
830 PAGE gel analysis of the culture supernatants. The SDS-PAGE gels were stained with SYPRO Ruby.

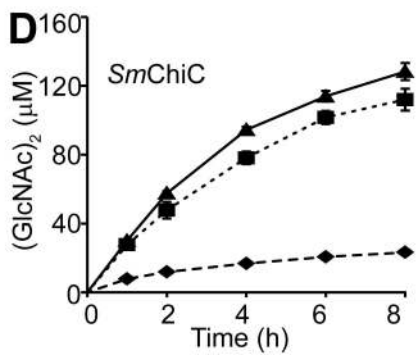
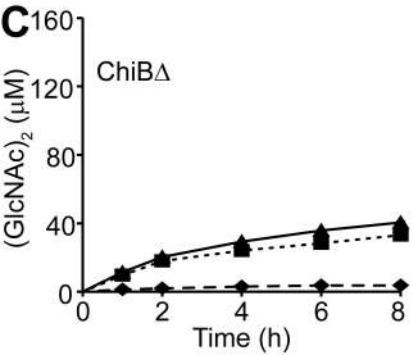
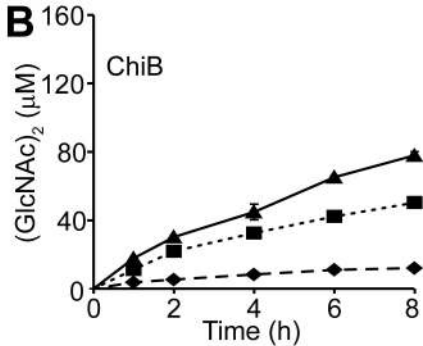
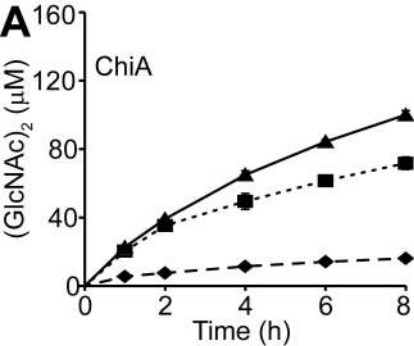
**A****B**

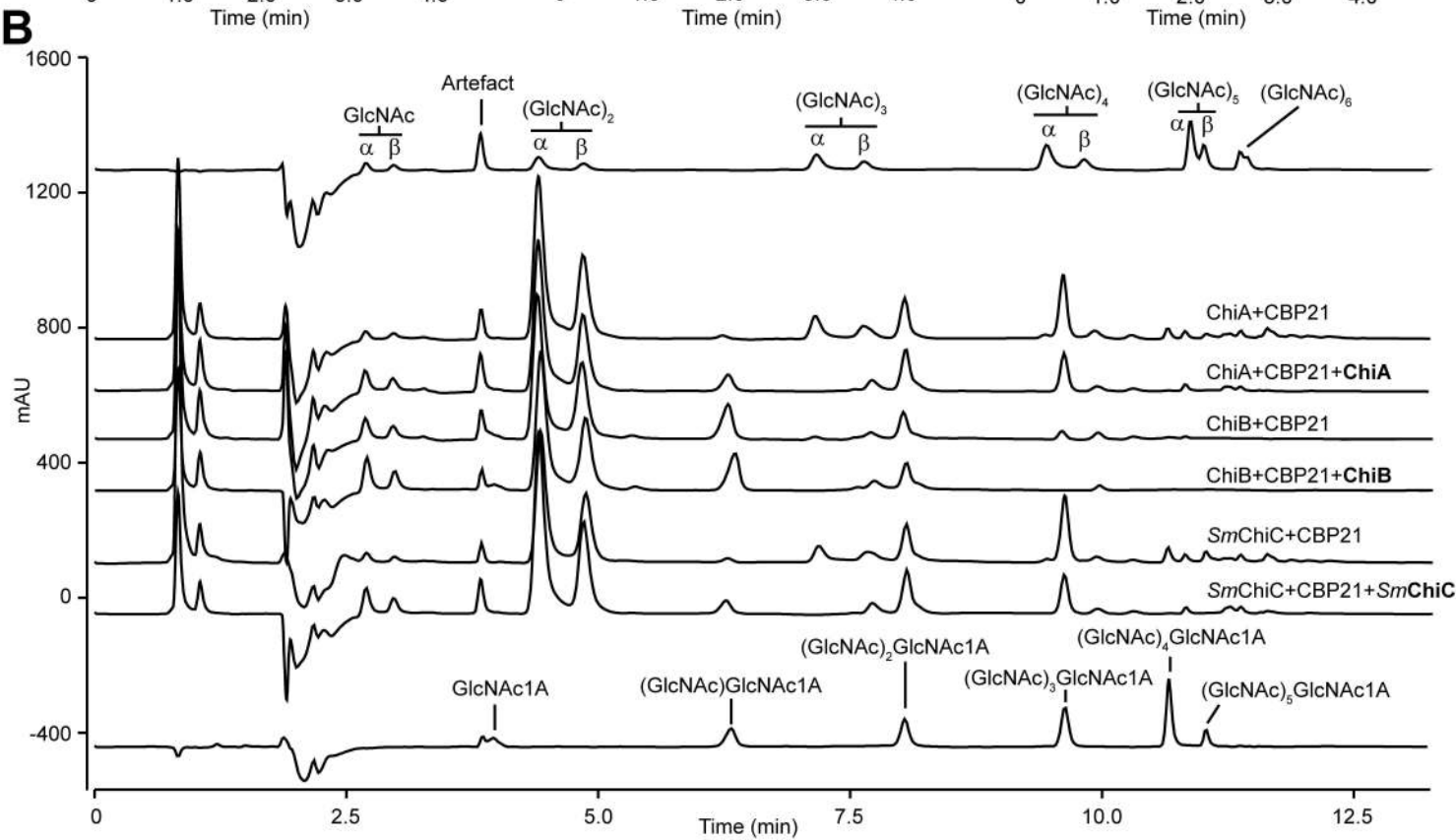
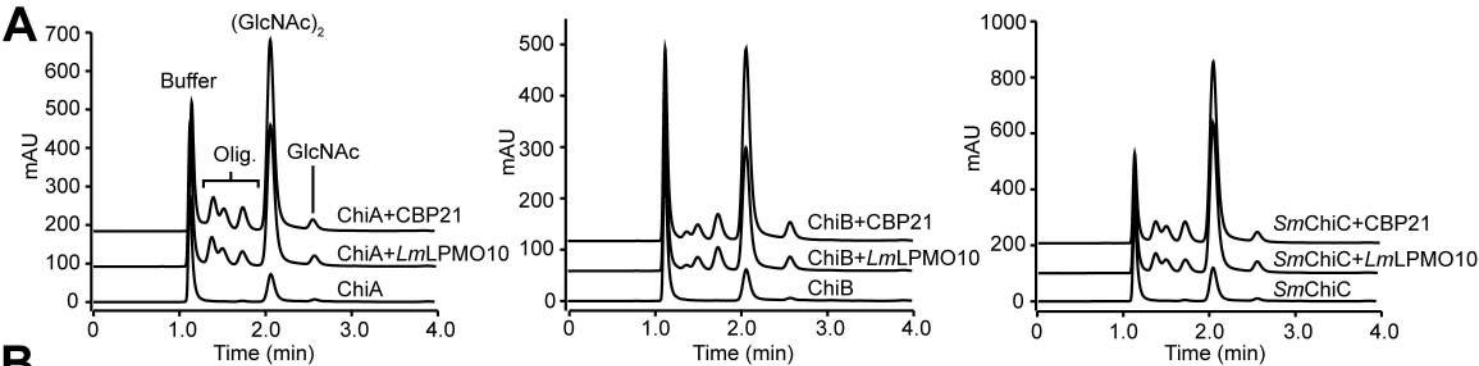


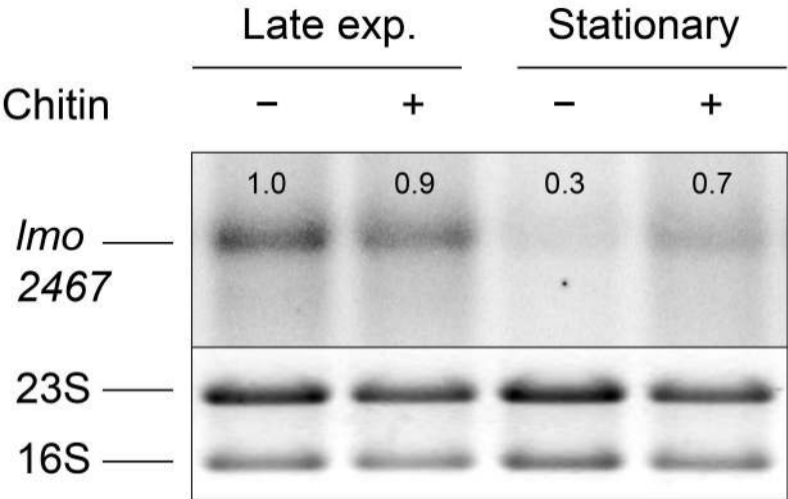












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