

The pentafunctional *FAS1* genes of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and *Yarrowia lipolytica* are co-linear and considerably longer than previously estimated

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Summary. The fatty acid synthetase (FAS) gene *FAS1* of the alkane-utilizing yeast *Yarrowia lipolytica* was cloned and sequenced. The gene is represented by an intron-free reading frame of 6228 bp encoding a protein of 2076 amino acids and 229980 Da molecular weight. This protein exhibits a 58% sequence similarity to the corresponding *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* FAS β -subunit. The sequential order of the five *FAS1*-encoded enzyme domains, acetyl transferase, enoyl reductase, dehydratase and malonyl/palmitoyl-transferase, is co-linear in both organisms. This finding agrees with available evidence that the functional organization of FAS genes is similar in related organisms but differs considerably between unrelated species. In addition, previously reported conflicting data concerning the 3' end of *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* were re-examined by genomic and cDNA sequencing of the relevant portion of the gene. Thereby, the translational stop codon was shown to lie considerably downstream of both published termination sites. The *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* gene thus has a corrected length of 6153 bp and encodes a protein of 2051 amino acids and 228667 Da molecular weight.

Key words: Yeast fatty acid synthetases – *Yarrowia lipolytica*/*Saccharomyces cerevisiae* *FAS1* sequence comparison – *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* sequence correction

Fatty acid synthetases exist either as non-aggregated multicomponent enzymes (type II FAS) or as highly integrated multifunctional proteins (type I FAS). Characteristically, type I synthetases are found in the cytoplasm of eucaryotic cells while their occurrence in bacteria is rare (Lynen 1980; Kawaguchi and Okuda 1977). In yeast and other lower fungi, the enzyme is an $\alpha_6\beta_6$ heteromultimeric complex whose subunits are encoded by two multifunctional genes, *FAS1* (subunit β) and *FAS2* (subunit α) (E. Schweizer et al. 1978). The genetic and struc-

tural organisation of type I synthetases from other eucaryotic taxa differ from this (Wakil et al. 1983). To date, the multifunctional *FAS* genes of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (M. Schweizer et al. 1986; Chirala et al. 1987; E. Schweizer et al. 1987; Mohamed et al. 1988), *Penicillium patulum* (Wiesner et al. 1988), rat (M. Schweizer et al. 1989; Amy et al. 1989) and chicken (Yuan et al. 1988) have been cloned and sequenced. As is evident from these studies the sequences of isofunctional domains in different FAS enzymes are clearly similar, although the extent of sequence conservation is often very low (Beck et al. 1990). On the other hand, the sequential order of catalytic domains along the multifunctional FAS chains is comparable only among related species such as yeast and *Penicillium* (Wiesner et al. 1988) while the animal and fungal *FAS* genes have very different structures (M. Schweizer et al. 1989). The similarity of the *Yarrowia lipolytica* and *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* sequences as reported in this study (Figs. 1 and 2) corroborates the above conclusions.

The complete nucleotide sequences of the *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* and *FAS2* genes were first reported from our laboratory (M. Schweizer et al. 1986). Subsequent reports from Chirala et al. (1987) and from Mohamed et al. (1988) essentially confirmed our data but came to different conclusions regarding the *FAS1* translational termination site. While the *FAS1* open reading frame was originally proposed to end at position 7002 of the sequence shown in Fig. 1, Chirala et al. (1987) postulated that the stop codon is located at position 7409. Consequently, the corresponding gene products differed by 135 amino acids and 14947 Da molecular weight. This discrepancy prompted us to re-investigate the C-terminal sequence of the *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* gene. These studies were complemented by *FAS1* sequence data of another yeast, *Y. lipolytica*, which were obtained in our laboratory at the same time.

Sequencing of the 3'-terminal portion of *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* was performed using appropriate genomic and cDNA clones (Fig. 3). The latter allowed us to localize the transcriptional termination/polyadenylation site at

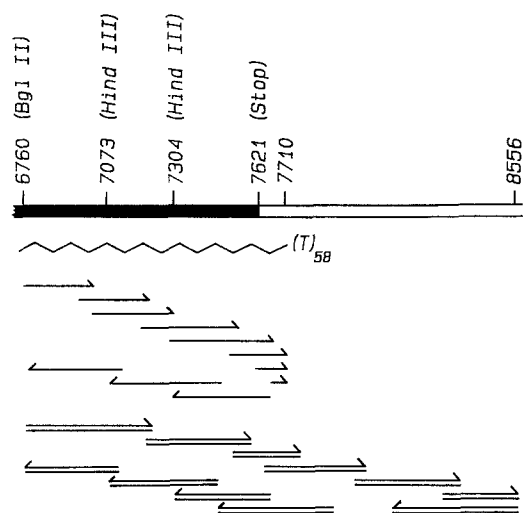


Fig. 3. Sequencing strategy of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* *FAS1* genomic (upper bar) and cDNA (wavy line) 3' termini. Arrows indicate sequenced portions of the genomic (double lines) and cDNA (single lines) subclones

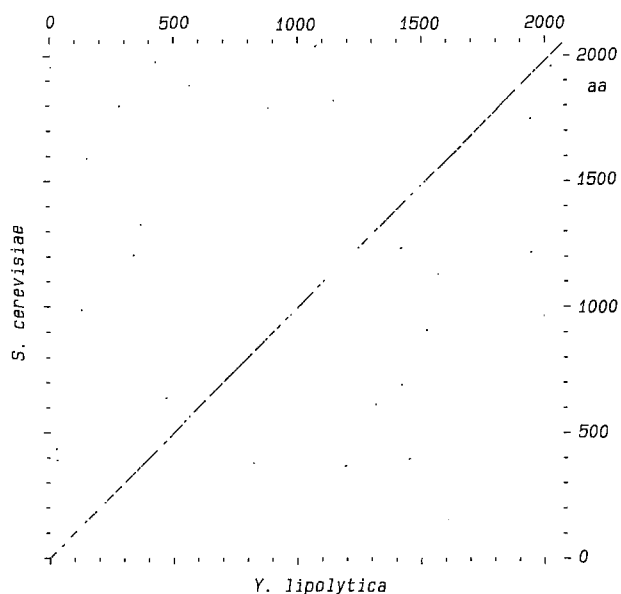


Fig. 4. Matrix comparison of the *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* and *Yarrowia lipolytica* *FAS* subunit β amino acid sequences. The Compare/Dotplot programs of the UWGCG software package version 6.1 were used with a window of 10 and a stringency of 5

position 7710 of the *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* sequence shown in Fig. 1. The re-examined 3'-terminal sequence comprised a total of 1780 bp. Within this region, 48 individual positions were found to conflict with either one or other of the two previously published sequences. Three of these differences involve our own original data (M. Schweizer et al. 1986) while the rest referred to the sequence of Chirala et al. (1987). Most significantly, the translational stop codon is now unequivocally located at position 7621 of the *S. cerevisiae* *FAS1* DNA sequence (Fig. 1). This location therefore differs from both end-points previously published (positions 7002 and 7409, respectively). The correct size of the *S. cerevisiae* *FAS* subunit β is thus 228667 Da, corresponding to a

protein of 2051 amino acids. A very similar size (2076 amino acids, 229980 Da) is derived for the *Y. lipolytica* *FAS* subunit β from the corresponding *FAS1* sequence data shown in Fig. 1. The pentafunctional subunit β of yeast *FAS* is thus distinctly larger than the trifunctional subunit α (E. Schweizer et al. 1987). By Western blot analyses using specific antibodies against the individual *FAS* subunits of both yeasts this conclusion was confirmed for the *Y. lipolytica* enzyme but not for *S. cerevisiae* *FAS* (R. Grünbein, unpublished). The same irregular mobility of subunit β is observed upon heterologous expression of *FAS1* in *Escherichia coli* cells (D. Stratmann, unpublished). It therefore appears to be an inherent characteristic of this protein rather than a consequence of post-translational degradation events.

Comparison of the *S. cerevisiae* and *Y. lipolytica* *FAS1* sequences reveals that both genes are co-linear in both their nucleotide and component enzyme sequences (Fig. 1 and 2). The average sequence similarities are 54% at the DNA and 58% at the protein level. This high degree of sequence conservation varies somewhat along the gene but is not restricted to distinct catalytic domains (Fig. 4). The *Y. lipolytica* *FAS1* sequence was determined by sequencing both strands over the entire length. The gene is considered to be intron free since it lacks the yeast specific TACTAAC box (Langford et al. 1984) and is functionally expressed in *S. cerevisiae* (R. Grünbein and W. Harrer, unpublished). Both *FAS1* genes are flanked, at comparable distances, by canonical transcriptional start and termination signals (Fig. 1). Recently, a similar colinearity was also observed for the *FAS2* genes of *S. cerevisiae* and *P. patulum* (Wiesner et al. 1988). The high degree of sequence conservation among fungal *FAS* genes appears to be correlated with the known overall structural similarity of their gene products.

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