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Inactivation Effect According to the Thermophilic Aerobic Oxidation Process of Encephalomyocarditis Virus in Swine Manure

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Livestock manure is a major source of pathogens (e.g., foot and mouth disease–FMD) and pollutants, in addition to odors from microbial degradation of organic matter. In this study, the feasibility of a Thermophilic Aerobic Oxidation (TAO) method for the treatment of Encephalomyocarditis virus (EMCV) in swine manure was investigated in reference to a classical alkaline method. In the course of this study, relative performance of two treatments was also tested against chemical oxygen demand (COD) and nutrient reduction. The TAO and alkaline method reduced total kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN) concentration by 52% and alkaline method 23%, respectively. In the case of NH₄–N, they reduced 67 and 11%, respectively. Similarly, the former also reduced the EC significantly compared to the latter. Based on this study, deactivation of the EMCV by the alkaline treatment system reduced EMCV by the latter approached 99.97% within an hour, whereas the former did the same a little slowly (by 3 hours). The overall results of our study suggest that TAO method is equally good or better than the alkaline method in treating infected manure to reduce microorganisms to an acceptable level. Thus, TAO system is considered an appropriate alternative to the alkaline treatment method for hygienic management of livestock manure.

Key words: Swine manure, Pathogens, Encephalomyocarditis virus (EMCV), Foot and mouth disease (FMD), Alkaline treatment, Thermophilic Aerobic Oxidation (TAO)

INTRODUCTION

Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are deemed to generate significant amounts of manure and wastewater that contain nutrients and pathogens. If manure and wastewater from livestock production facilities are not managed and treated properly, they may pose both environmental and public health concerns (Burkholder *et al.*, 2007). In particular, if manure contaminates food crops (e.g., leafy vegetables consumed as food), contaminants and pathogens may easily penetrate into the food chain and water system (Unc and Goss, 2004). Thus, manure may act as a medium to transfer a variety of manure borne diseases to humans.

Manure harbors many microorganisms, but the most common human pathogens are Campylobacter spp., Salmonella spp., verotoxigenic Escherichia coli O157, Listeria monocytogenes, and Cryptosporidium parvum (Plaut, 2000; Adak et al., 2002). Survival of these microorganisms depends on the medium they grow. For

example, E. coli O157, Salmonella and Campylobacter may survive in stored slurries and wastewater for up to three months depending on the storage temperature, whereas *Listeria* may survive up to six months in slurry or wastewater (Nicholson et al., 2005). Similarly, others also reported that non-toxigenic E. coli may survive in soil for 7-8 days (Taylor and Burrows, 1971) to a few weeks (Linton and Hinton, 1984). Salmonella is likely to survive for a longer period of time (up to 968 days) in soils (Jones, 1986). Campylobacter, (naturally present in dairy cattle slurry) applied to cropland in the spring may be detected 20 days after land application of manure (Linton and Hinton, 1984). Therefore, it is important to treat manure, especially infected manure, before disposing of or applying it to cropland to reduce environmental and public health concerns.

There are many treatment options (for livestock manure), the most common of which are physical, chemical and biological methods. Physical treatments use temperature and/or pressure, and chemical treatments typically use acidic or basic materials to adjust the pH below 4 or above 10. Biological treatments include composting (solid) and/or anaerobic/aerobic methods (liquid) (Heinonen–Tanski *et al.*, 2006). Common treatment methods include pasteurization, chemical disinfection, heap composting, aeration, and biogas production of livestock manure. Some of the characteristics of these treatment methods are shown in Table 1.

Most of these methods destroy microorganisms to an acceptable level of hygienic risk, while requiring longer treatment time. There is need for a robust treatment that reduces microorganisms in contaminated manure to an

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Table 1. A summary of advantages and disadvantages of different manure treatment methods a

Treatment method	Hygienisation limitations	Costs	Technical limitations
Pasteurization	Good at 70°C	Capital costs high, can be divided into heating and electricity needed	Mainly for slurry
Chemical disinfection	Good	Capital cost low, operation costs higher	Both of solid manure and slurry
Heap composting	Better if temperature increases up to 60°C	Capital costs low, Labor costs rather high	For solid manure, no heating is required
Aeration	Temperature of 30–40°C should be reached. The 60–70°C may be possible	Capital costs rather low, electricity needed	For slurry and food industry by–products
Biogas production	Temperature of 50–60°C should be reached	Capital costs very high, heating and electricity needed, but can be extracted from process	Suitable for slurry and partly for solid manure and food industry by–product

a) Data extracted from Heinonen-Tanski et al. (2006)

acceptable limit within a short period of treatment time. Auto-thermal thermophilic aerobic digestion (ATAD) is a well-recognized technology for treating municipal sludge and wastewater to reduce microorganisms. In this type of bioreactor, the temperature rises to over 50°C due to the conservation of heat produced by the aerobic metabolism of the microorganisms that consume the organic material present in the sludge (Tchobanoglous et al., 2003). In this system, a well-designed bioreactor can self-heat up to 75°C (but preferably in the range of 55-65°C), thus causing pathogen destruction while conserving nitrogen (Juteau, 2006). Thermophilic Aerobic Oxidation (TAO) is a system that treats liquid manure in a shorter time compared to ATAD, destroying pathogens and converting swine manure into high-quality liquid fertilizer (Lee et al., 2004). Additionally, the TAO system also reduces odor during the process due to use of a proprietary microbe (Lee et al., 1999; Lee and Lee, 2000a).

In Korea, foot and mouth disease (FMD) that took place from November, 2010 to April, 2011 caused loss of approximately 2.1 billion dollars in 144 days (Shin *et al.*, 2012). Due to FMD, 151,000 cows and 3,285,000 pigs

were incinerated and buried (Kim and Kim, 2011). The FMD virus is a class A disease specified by the Office International des Epizooties (OIE) (Kim et al., 2012). The FMD virus may be infected quickly to other healthy animals through saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, and feces. Typically, large quantities of FMD virus are present in the saliva of an infected animal. However, a small amount of virus may also be present in feces and urine, which raises questions regarding how barn manure or wastes can be safely handled during an outbreak of FMD, particularly regarding safe disposal of manure onto pastures as fertilizer (Sellers, 1971). The FMD virus is most stable at near-neutral pH and is sensitive to even mild acidity. Manure pH is neutral to slightly alkaline. The combination of rapidly increased temperature above 50°C and pH above or below 7 will kill 90% of the virus (Pharo, 2002). Inactivation parameters are listed in Table 2.

In Korea the standard protocol is to subject the FMD virus-infected manure to chemical treatment following the FMD Standing Operating Procedure (SOP). Manure is treated with alkaline material (normally sodium hydroxide-NaOH, 97.0% with total nitrogen 0.002%) at pH >10

Table 2. The effect of temperature and pH on time for 90% foot–and–mouth virus inactivation $^{\rm a}$

Effect of temp	Effect of temperature (at pH 7.5)		Effect of pH (at 4°C)	
Temperature	Inactivation time (90%)	рН	Inactivation time (90%)	
61°C	30 seconds	10.0	14 hours	
55°C	2 minutes	9.0	1 week	
43°C	1 hour	8.0	3 weeks	
39°C	7 hour	7.0–7.5	> 5 weeks	
37°C	21 hour	6.5	14 hours	
$20^{\circ}\mathrm{C}$	11 days	6.0	1 minute	
$4^{\circ}\mathrm{C}$	18 weeks	5.0	1 second	

a) Data extracted from Pharo (2002)

for approximately 2–3 days. Treated manure is neutralized with acidic agent (pH 6–8) in accordance with the treatment protocols for livestock manure. However, if a large–scale FMD outbreak occurs, such approach is no longer valid due to the difficulties in management (e.g. treatment method, inactivation effect, after–treatment, cost, operation time etc.) of pathogen–infected manure. The application of the TAO system might shed light on treating infected manure in a short period, while also producing high–quality fertilizer as an end product. Therefore, contaminated livestock manure treatment is an urgent solution that can reduce contaminants quickly while reducing the risk of pathogenic viruses when manure is applied to cropland or pastureland.

This study was conducted to compare the high–temperature liquid fermentation method (TAO system) to the standard alkaline FMD manure treatment. Effectiveness in mitigating microorganisms and other contaminants from manure in a relatively short period of time in order to respond to disease outbreak under Korean manure management practices was studied.

As mentioned before, the TAO system can rapidly decompose organic liquid materials into a safe fermented liquid fertilizer rich in nutrients. This system can also reduce odor–causing substances such as Volatile Fatty Acids (VFA) and contaminants, organic substances, nitrogen and phosphorus. Additionally, this process can kill pathogenic microorganisms due to self–sustaining operating temperature at >50°C regardless of seasonal temperature changes (Lee and Lee, 2000b; Lee and Lee 2000c).

In this study, an Encephalomyocarditis virus (EMCV) similar to the FMD virus was used. The inactivation of EMCV virus followed the same FMD chemical treatment SOP. The objective of this study was to compare the effectiveness of the TAO system with the standard alkaline treatment of manure processing in mitigating pathogens and other contaminants from pig manure.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Materials

Raw pig manure was collected from a pig farm located in Wonju city of Gangwon–do, Korea and samples were

stored at 4°C before analysis. Manure physicochemical analysis such as pH, electrical conductivity (EC), chemical oxygen demands (CODcr), total phosphorus (TP), total kjeldahl nitrogen (TKN), and ammonium–nitrogen (NH₄–N) were determined using standard methods as described in the physicochemical properties of treated and untreated manure samples.

Experimental methods

Two treatment processes, alkaline and a TAO manure treatment, were evaluated and compared.

Alkaline manure treatment method

The Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) for inactivating the FMD virus was based on recommendations provided by the Korean Government (Table 3) (MAFRA, 2012). Sodium hydroxide (NaOH, 97.0%, total nitrogen, 0.002%) was added to manure at 10~g/L in a 200-L tank (540 mm (D) \times 900 mm (H)) (Fig. 1A) and stirred for 84 hours. Samples were collected at a predetermined times. Samples were stored in a refrigerator and kept at 4°C before analysis.

Thermophilic Aerobic Oxidation (TAO) manure treatment method

The TAO reactor (200 L) used in this study consisted of an inlet, outlet, aeration motor, parcel device and control device measuring 540 mm (D) \times 900 mm (H) (Fig. 1B). A viewing port was installed to visualize internal sensors, operating levels and internal changes (of temperature) during operation. The reactor had a concave bottom for ease of removing digestate and cleaning. A lot of 120 L of pig slurry was placed in the reactor and stirred for 84 hours. The physicochemical properties of liquid within the reactor and the inactivation effects of EMCV were monitored during the study period.

EMCV inactivation test method

The Dialysis Cassettes (Slide–A–Lyzer[™], Thermo Scientific, USA) were used for handling viruses and extracting samples in this study. The specification of regenerated–cellulose dialysis membrane and the Dialysis Cassettes are shown in Table 4. In this study, dialysis cassettes were used due to their excellent capacity for pH

Table 3. Alkaline treatment method of manure according to the Standing Operating Procedure (SOP) for FMD

Item	Disinfection and Neutralization Agents	Disinfectant Application Amount per 1 ton of Manure ^{a)}	pH Range	Treatment Period
Alkaline Treatment	NaOH 98% CaO 85%	5 kg/ton 11 kg/ton	$pH \ge 10$ $pH \ge 10$	2~3 days 2~3 days
Neutralization Treatment b)	Citric acid 94%	5 kg/ton	pH 6~8	-

a) The disinfectant application amount should be adjusted according to the characteristics of manure.

b) The neutralized liquid or solid manure may be processed for liquid fertilizers, composts or others consignments. However, the process criteria according to 'Act on the management and use of livestock excreta' should be adhered to during the process.

Table 4. Dialysis Membrane Specifications used in the experiment

Composition	Regenerated cellulose synthesized by the Viscose method
Thickness	0.9 to 1.2 mil (22.5 to 30 μ m)
Sample volume	5–3mL
Membrane	10,000 MWCO ^{a)}

a) Molecular weight cut-off

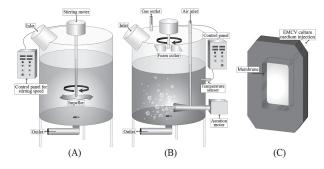


Fig. 1. Equipment and materials used in this study. (A) Alkaline treatment; (B) TAO treatment; (C) Dialysis cassette.

and gas exchange internally and externally in addition to their robust preservation of viruses (Khan *et al.*, 2013).

The FMD virus is a high–risk pathogen and it is difficult to handle. Thus, instead of the FMD virus, actual tests were conducted with EMCV, which is similar in nature. The Vero cell (Vero ATCC® CCL–81TM Cercopithecus aethiops kidney) was used for the cell line of viral cell culture. A total of 3 mL of cell culture medium was placed in the Dialysis Cassette as show in Fig. 1C. The initial titer of EMCV was 7.75 \log_{10} TCID₅₀/mL and the Dialysis Cassette was placed on the Dialysis Cassette rack. The initial titer of EMCV was measured using the Reed–Muench method (Reed and Muench, 1938).

The inactivation assessment test of EMCV was carried out by four treatments such as a. control, b. fixed room temperature, c. alkaline treatment, d. TAO treatment. Like other treatments, in the control treatment, the same standard storage tank was used, but no treatment was added after adding 100 L of pig manure slurry. In the case of fixed room temperature, the Dialysis Cassette was injected with virus culture medium, and placed in the same room under the same environmental conditions.

For each treatment, 18 Dialysis Cassettes were injected with virus culture medium and placed on the Dialysis Cassette rack. The control, alkaline and TAO treatment, and the Dialysis Cassette rack were located approximately 20 cm away from the bottom of each reactor and retaining tank. During each sampling, nine samples were taken for each treatment. However, two Dialysis Cassettes per treatment were used for EMCV analysis.

Sampling and analysis of EMCV samples

The Dialysis Cassette injected with virus culture medium was collected at 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48 and 84 hours following each treatment. After sampling, 2 mL of virus culture medium contents from the Dialysis Cassette was placed into the conical tube, rapidly cooled using dry ice and ethanol, and stored at -70°C for 2 weeks and the inactivation effects of EMCV were analyzed and assessed. The collected samples were used for the assessment of the activation of EMCV, and the Vero cell was used as the test cell. Each undiluted solution samples were treated with gentamycin. The samples treated with gentamycin were diluted with the medium by tenfold, and 25-\(\mu\)l diluted samples were immunized into the cell and dispensed into the medium after 40 minutes. A lot of $175 \,\mu$ l of each was cultured for 3 days for observation of the cytopathic effect (CPE). The cytopathic effect occurs as a result of the virus being infected with tissue culture cells and the quantification of virus using such possible modification effects.

Physicochemical properties of treated and untreated manure

Each treatment operation was repeated five times. The liquid manure sample of the control, alkaline treatment and TAO system treatment were collected at 1, 3, 6, 12, 24, 48 and 84 hours. The liquid manure samples of each treatment were analyzed for pH, EC, CODcr, TP, TKN and NH₄–N. pH and EC were measured with a handheld meter (YSI–556MPS, USA) immediately after collection. CODcr was determined following the standard methods (APHA, 2005). TP was determined by the ascorbic acid method (APHA, 2005) using a spectrophotometer (Optizen, Mecasys, Korea) at a wavelength of 880 nm. TKN and NH₄–N were analyzed by the kjeldahl method in accordance with standard sewage analysis methods (JSWA, 1984).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some of the initial physicochemical properties of manure have been listed in Table 5. Following treatments, these changes in properties are described in the following sections.

Changes in internal temperature of the reactor during TAO treatment

During the TAO treatment process, the outside and inside temperature of the reactor was monitored and presented in Fig. 2. During the TAO system treatment,

Table 5. The physicochemical characteristics of swine manure used in the experiment

Parameter	Average	Parameter	Average
рН	7.55 ± 0.2	CODer (mg/L)	$54,750 \pm 5,000$
EC (mS/cm)	23.5 ± 1.33	TKN (mg/L)	$4,060 \pm 328$
TS (mg/L)	$29,933 \pm 1,107$	NH ₄ -N (mg/L)	$2,660 \pm 165$
TP (mg/L)	983 ± 20		

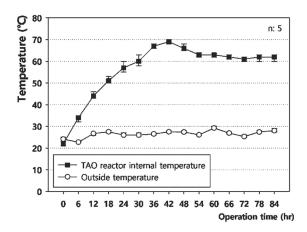


Fig. 2. Change in temperature during TAO treatment.

the outside temperature remained constant at 20°C, but TAO system temperature started to increase from 22°C to 50°C within 18 hours of treatment and maintained an average temperature of 62°C during the remainder of the study period (84 hours).

At 60°C, a significant reduction in COD and ammonia and a complete removal of fecal coliforms, such as Campylobacter spp., are likely to happen (Juteau et al., 2004). Similarly, fecal streptococci and Bovine parvovirus concentration are likely to decrease in a full-scale AT process operated at 55°C, but they are not eliminated completely (Martens et al., 1998). Other researchers (Monteith et al., 1986) have also found that bovine enterovirus can be inactivated to below detectable levels in digested liquid manure heated to 70°C, thought some bovine parvovirus was detected after this treatment. Bøtner (1991) looked at the temperature-dependent inactivation of Aujeszky's Disease Virus (ADV) during aerobic storage at 5 and 55°C. He noticed that the virus was only inactivated after 15 weeks at 5°C, whereas no virus was detected after 10 min at 55°C.

Herniman et al. (1973) looked at Swine vesicular disease virus (SVDV) and studied thermal activation in both milk and pig slurry. They found that virus in milk can be inactivated by heating to 60°C within 2 min, whereas virus in slurry required a slightly higher temperature (64°C) for inactivation for the same treatment time. Böhm etal. (1984) studied the inactivation from 10⁷ to 10⁸ IU to below detectable levels of several animal viruses in a rotating aeration system. They found that the FMD virus was undetectable after 48 hours of aeration at a pH of 8 at 50°C; ADV needed 5 hours of aeration at 40°C for inactivation, and SVDV required 48 hours of aeration at the same temperature. In this study, the TAO system was able to maintain sustainable temperature >60°C required for destroying most of the virus. Thus, this system may be used for treating infected manure as an alternative to the alkaline treatment system.

Changes in physicochemical properties of manure during SOP alkaline treatment and TAO treatment

A pH of 10.8 was reached in 60 minutes with a pH of

10.5 maintained until the end of the 84-hour experiment (Fig. 3A). A pH value >10 above 10°C is sufficient for inactivation of bacteria (Allievi et al., 1994; Bachrach et al., 1957). In this study, the pH of alkaline treatment rose above 10 after 60 minutes of treatment initiation and maintained pH >10 throughout the study. Alkaline treatment is well-known for its ability to destroy pathogens, and this might be the case in this study (Sobsey et al., 2006; Hrazdira et al., 2002; Callis et al., 1986). However, for the control, the pH remained on an average 7.7 until the completion of the test. Thus, it is unlikely that there will be any changes of microorganisms in the control based on pH. In the case of TAO treatment, pH gradually increased from pH 7.7 to 9.5 over time, and this trend was similar to other studies involving pig manure (Zhang and Zhu, 2005). The drastic increase in pH by aeration may be due to the conversion of ammonium into ammonia (Luo et al., 2001).

Changes in EC of different treatments is shown in Fig. 3B. TAO treatment reduced EC from 22.04 mS/cm to 10 mS/cm within 84 hours of treatment. The EC concentration of alkaline–treated manure increased slightly. EC remained at 22 mS/cm for the control treatment. Generally when pig manure is aerated, it is known to reduce the concentration of EC (Choi et al., 2010). The TAO system reduced EC significantly. Thus, if TAO—treated manure is applied to crop land it will reduce salt accumulation in soil. Manure treated with other methods may lead to accumulation of salt in cropland, so the EC of soil must be measured before applying manure to cropland (Kim et al., 2012).

In the case of TAO treatment, the COD_{cr} decreased from 53,750 mg/L to 26,000 mg/L after 84 hours of treatment, thus showing effectiveness (52% reduction) of the TAO system over the alkaline treatment and control, where no COD reduction was noticed (Fig. 3C). Generally, land application of manure across the farmland may increase COD flow into the water, thus potentially increasing COD load downstream (Hong and Lee, 2011). So, in order to ensure safe dissemination of livestock manure on to the farmland and to reduce secondary environmental pollution, COD reduction should be a priority of those responsible for applying manure. The TAO treatment system may be adapted to reduce COD before applying manure to cropland, thus minimizing environmental concerns.

In the case of alkaline treatment, the average concentration of TP was 927 mg/L, and in the control treatment the average TP concentration was 962 mg/L. Thus, there were no noticeable changes in TP for both treatments. In the case of TAO treatment, TP concentrations decreased by 39% (from 983 mg/L to 597 mg/L) (Fig. 3D). The reduction of TP by the TAO system is likely due to precipitation of biological and chemical phosphorus. The reason for this is that even at low aeration of swine liquid manure, there is the formation of insoluble hydroxyl apatite and struvite (Suzuki et al., 2002; Ndegwa et al., 2003). This crystallization seems to be due to the increase in pH induced by aeration (Juteau, 2006). The phenomenon is temperature–dependent in

both psychrophilic (Ndegwa et al., 2003) and thermophilic (Juteau et al., 2004) ranges. Thus, the TAO system is also able to reduce the TP concentration from liquid swine manure; therefore, this system will reduce TP from runoff and minimize environmental concern from disposal of manure.

The TKN concentration in the control treatment changed slightly towards the end (from 4,060 mg/L to 3,830 mg/L during 84–hour treatment time) (Fig. 3E). In case of alkaline treatment, TKN concentration decreased by 23% (from 4,060 mg/L to 3,150 mg/L), whereas the TAO treatment reduces TKN concentration by 52% (from 4,060 mg/L to 1,960 mg/L) within the same treatment time. Similar to TKN, NH₄–N concentration in the control treatment remained pretty much constant during the 84–hour treatment time (Fig. 3F). Like TKN, alkaline treatment was also not very effective in reducing NH₄–N concentration.

Alkaline treatment reduced NH₄-N concentration by

only 11% from 2,660 mg/L to 2,380 mg/L. In contrast, TAO treatment reduced NH₄–N concentration by 67% from 2,660 mg/L to 875 mg/L. The reduction of NH₄–N is likely due to degassing of NH₄–N during the aeration, as the proportion of free ammonia becomes higher with higher pH in the solution (An *et al.*, 2011). According to Liao *et al.* (1995), degassing of 80% ammonia occur within 20 hours of treatment at 20°C, but it took 30 hours at 13°C at the same pH. Thus, the TAO system outperformed alkaline treatment in reducing NH₄–N in manure, providing additional benefits along with microorganism reduction.

Deactivation effect of EMCV in alkaline treatment and TAO treatment

In order to examine the changes of EMCV concentration, the potency of the virus was examined. The initial titer level of the virus at the control room temperature was $10^{\rm s}$ TCID₅₀/mL, but after 84 hours its concentration

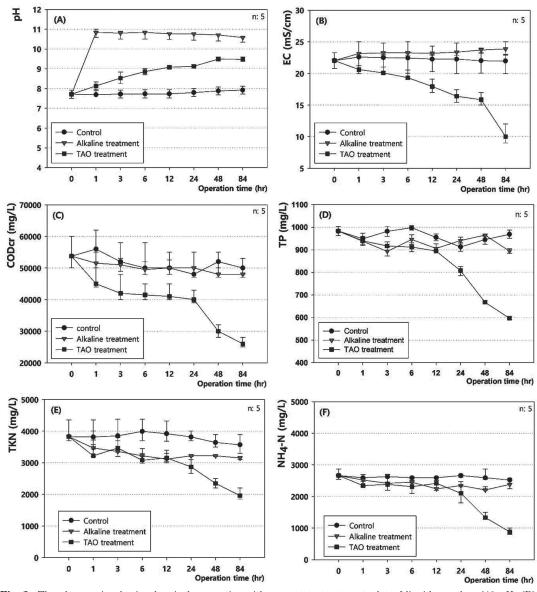


Fig. 3. The changes in physicochemical properties with respect to treatment plot of liquid samples. (A) pH; (B) EC; (C) CODcr; (D) TP; (E) TKN; (F) NH₄-N.

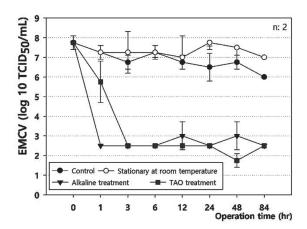


Fig. 4. EMCV changes with respect to treatment plot of liquid samples.

dropped to 10^7 TCID₅₀/mL (Fig. 4). Similarly, after completing the control treatment, the titer of the virus in the control was 10^6 TCID₅₀/mL, which confirmed that the titer of the virus was maintained at a higher level. In the case of alkaline treatment, the titer of EMCV dropped to $10^{2.5}$ TCID₅₀/mL within one hour of treatment, thus reducing EMCV's concentration by 99.97%. However, it took three hours for the TAO system to reduce the titer of EMCV at the same reduction level (99.97%); i.e., $10^{2.5}$ TCID₅₀/mL. The EMCV used in the study has stronger survivability than FMDV in the natural ecosystems, and the test conditions represent 1,000 times higher concentration (10^7) than the expression levels of the pathogenic viruses (10^4), thus confirming that EMCV was actually deactivated.

CONCLUSIONS

Livestock manure harbors pathogens and pollutants like FMD, and it is also a source of mal-odorous compounds due to the microbial degradation of organic matter. Due to the FMD virus outbreak in Korea, a chemical treatment method with a strict SOP has been implemented to reduce pathogenic microorganisms. At the same time, the Korean Government is exploring other alternative robust treatment options to manage and mitigate any future disease outbreak and, consequently environmental problem and health-related concern.

Although chemical treatment methods are effective for controlling the pathogenic microorganisms, this treatment method has issues with the post–treatment management of treated liquid manure. Thus, the TAO system is an alternative treatment option, which is very effective in reducing pathogenic microorganisms and other pollutants. Compared to alkaline treatment, TAO treatment reduces COD significantly from pig manure by 52%, but there is no COD reduction following alkaline treatment.

Similarly, the TAO system reduced TKN concentration by 52%, but alkaline treatment reduced TKN by 23%. This means that treating manure with the TAO system would reduce contaminant runoff compared with the alkaline treatment. Similarly, based on the deactivation

of EMCV, TAO treatment is equally good or better than the alkaline chemical treatment in treating infected manure to reduce microorganisms to an acceptable level. Additionally, the TAO system also reduce odor and produce high–quality liquid fertilizer. Therefore, the TAO system may be considered as an alternative to alkaline treatment to treat infected manure or manure–borne disease.

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