



abfB-2 gene of Penicillium funiculosum

The invention relates to the *abfB-2* gene isolated from *Penicillium funiculosum* and the ABFB-2 polypeptide encoded by this gene having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity.

Penicillium funiculosum is a *Talaromyces* belonging to the *Aspergilleae* family. The isolation of this microorganism from numerous organic substrates which are subject to aerial or aqueous contamination shows that this fungus possesses a range of hydrolytic enzymes of a surprising richness. The use of this enzymatic cocktail in animal feed contributes towards the depolymerization of the natural organic substances and makes it possible to improve their digestibility. WO 99/57325 thus describes a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain called IMI378536 which produces a mixture of enzymes which is particularly suitable as animal feed. However, the enzymatic cocktails produced by *Penicillium funiculosum* have not been biochemically characterized to any great extent. Indeed, only a limited number of enzymatic activities, such as xylanases and β -glucanases are generally measured on the fermentation broths obtained. These activities reflect only a fraction of the enzymatic population present in the cocktail.

Hemicellulolytic compounds derived from agriculture constitute the second polysaccharide reserve after cellulose in plant tissues. This group is characterized by a wide variety of heteropolysaccharides, of which the principle representatives are xylans, arabinans, galactans, glucans and mannans. Arabinose, in its furfural form, is widely represented among the heteropolysaccharides such as arabinans and arabinoxylans. Arabinan is a polymer with arabinofuranose residues linked by α -1-5 bonds and it



may be substituted with 1 or 2 arabinose residues at the O-2 or O-3 position. As regards the arabinoxylans, the α -L-arabinofuranosyl residues are linked to the principle β -1-4-xylopyranosyl chain by α -1-3 and α -1-2
5 bonds. The presence of arabinose residues on these side chains can restrict the enzymatic hydrolysis of hemicellulolytic compounds in numerous industrial applications such as the enhancement of the digestibility of animal feed. The enzymes cleaving the
10 α -L-arabinofuranoside bonds can act in synergy with xylanases to allow the hydrolysis of arabinoxylans and arabinans.

The arabinase activities (endo-, exo-arabinase and, predominantly, the α -L-arabinofuranosidase activities) can therefore actively and synergistically contribute, with the xylanases, to the depolymerization of the hemicellulolytic compounds. The hemicellulolytic and pectic compounds may represent up to 50% of the total
20 carbohydrates present in plants and they constitute a major source of energy for animals. The enhancement of the digestibility of these compounds is correlated with the decrease in the degree of substitution of the arabinosyl residues within the hemicellulolytic
25 compounds (Brice, R.E., Morrison, I.M. 1982, Carbohydr. Res. 101: 93-100).

The enzymes which hydrolyse the bonds between L-arabinose residues have been isolated from
30 microorganisms such as bacteria or filamentous fungi. Arabinosidases consist mainly of α -L-arabinofuranosidases (EC 3.2.1.55) which are capable of hydrolysing the non-reducing α -L-arabinofuranosyl residues derived from L-arabinoxylan or compounds such
35 as arabinans and arabinogalactans.

The α -L-arabinofuranosidases (EC 3.2.1.55) have been classified into two families of Glycoside Hydrolases

(GH 51 and GH 54) according to their protein sequence similarities. These two families differ by virtue of their specificity for substrate contained in polysaccharides. The first group (GH 51) contains type
5 A arabinofuranosidases which act only on small linear structures of α -1-5 linked arabinofuranosyl oligosaccharides. The second group consists of type B arabinofuranosidases (GH 54) which catalyse the hydrolysis of the α -1,5, α -1,3 and α -1,2 bonds of the
10 side chains contained in the arabinofuranosyl-oligosaccharide compounds.

The B arabinofuranosidases (ABFB) have been isolated from numerous bacteria, but also from filamentous
15 fungi. The genus *Aspergillus* is the most widely represented, but they have also been isolated from the genera *Trichoderma*, *Penicillium* and *Fusarium*.

WO 96/29416, WO 96/06935 and US 5,989,887 describe
20 *Aspergillus niger* arabinofuranosidase genes.

Gielkens et al. (Microbiology, 145, 735-741, 1999) have described the *Aspergillus nidulans abfB* gene.

25 WO 96/29416, WO 96/06935, WO 2004/018662 and US 5,989,887 describe *Aspergillus niger* arabinofuranosidase genes. The protein sequence alignment indicates that the *A. niger* abfB protein is 50.9% identical to the *P. funiculosum* ABFB-2 protein. None of
30 the characteristics essential for the use of the polypeptide in animal nutrition is described in these applications.

Clinche et al. (J. Agric. Food Chem., 45, 2379-2383,
35 1997) have described three α -L-arabinofuranosidases derived from *Aspergillus terreus* having a potential application in oenology.

The *Aspergillus kawachii* and *Aspergillus awamori* *abfB* genes have been described by Koseki et al. (J. of Bioscience and Bioengineering, Vol. 96, No. 3, 232-241, 2003). These enzymes have applications in the
5 fermentation of the Japanese liquor *shochu*.

The *abfB* gene from the filamentous fungus *Trichoderma reesei* has been described by Margolles-Clark et al. (Applied and Environmental Microbiology, 3840-3846,
10 1996).

Panagiotou et al. have also described two extracellular alpha-L-arabinofuranosidases derived from *Fusarium oxysporum* (Can J Microbiol. 2003: 49(10): 639-4).
15

Carvallo et al. (Mycol. Res., 107 (4), 388-394, 2003) have described the B α -L-arabinofuranosidase from *Penicillium purpurogenum*. The protein sequence alignment indicates that the *P. purpurogenum* *abf-1*
20 protein is 51.2% identical to the *P. funiculosum* ABFB-2 protein. None of the characteristics essential for the use of the polypeptide in animal nutrition is described in this article.

25 Sakamoto et al. (FEBS Letters 560, 199-204, 2004) have described the *Penicillium chrysogenum* *abnx* gene encoding nevertheless an arabinase activity distinct from the ABFB activity.

30 However, these ABFB enzymes do not have the optimum qualities required for application in animal feed.

Indeed, to be utilizable in animal feed, the ABFBs must possess properties compatible with the treatments to
35 which the feedingstuffs intended for this feed are subjected. In particular, the activity of the enzymes used must be stable under the process temperature and pH conditions, and, if possible, be optimum in the

preparation of these feedingstuffs and under the conditions which exist in the digestive system of the animals ingesting these feedingstuffs.

5 Furthermore, these enzymes must have a broad spectrum of action (debranching) on the heteropolysaccharides (arabinans, arabinoxylans and arabinogalactans) to allow effective enhancement of the digestibility of the feedingstuffs by the animals. This enhancement of the
10 digestibility of the feedingstuffs makes it possible to increase their nutritional value. Accordingly, the enzymes having enhanced specificity (stereospecificity, enantioselectivity), activity or affinity towards the natural substrates arabinoxylans and arabinans are of
15 great interest as animal feed.

In addition, before hydrolysing the arabinofuranosyl bonds, it is absolutely necessary beforehand to depolymerize complex molecules such as cellulose. The
20 fungal cellulolytic enzymes (cellulases) possess in general an fCDB domain (fungal type cellulose-binding domain) which plays a predominant role in this depolymerization of cellulose.

25 The present invention describes a *Penicillium funiculosum* L-arabinofuranosidase B (ABFB-2) suitable for application in animal nutrition and the gene encoding this enzyme. The invention also relates to the homologues, variants and fragments of ABFB-2 preserving
30 the same catalytic properties.

Advantageously, the ABFB enzymes according to the invention have a very acidic optimum pH (pH 2.6) and preserve 55% of their activity at pH 1.5.

35 Advantageously, the ABFB-2 enzyme possesses a fungal type cellulose-binding domain (fCBD). This type of domain has been described in other enzymes but had

never been described for a fungal arabinofuranosidase. It has been possible to experimentally verify the functionality of this cellulose-binding domain of the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 enzyme. The presence of this binding domain increases the affinity of the enzyme for its substrate and consequently makes it possible to enhance the degradation of the insoluble cellulose.

Thus, by virtue of its catalytic properties and its affinity for cellulose, the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 is therefore particularly suitable for application as animal feed in particular.

However, the enzymes according to the invention also have other industrial or agroindustrial applications. There may be mentioned in particular the treatment of fruit juices, the manufacture of paper, the conversion of hemicellulolytic biomass to fuel or chemical products, the preparation of alcoholic drinks by fermentation.

Description of the sequences

SEQ ID No. 1: Genomic sequence of the *Penicillium funiculosum* *abfB-2* gene.

SEQ ID No. 2: Sequence of the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 polypeptide having type B α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity.

SEQ ID No. 3: fCBD domain of the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2.

SEQ ID No. 4: domain of low complexity of the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2.

SEQ ID No. 5: fCBD domain of the *Penicillium funiculosum* cyanomyl esterase.

SEQ ID No. 6: fCBD domain of the *Penicillium funiculosum* endo-1,4-D-xylanase.

SEQ ID No. 7: fCBD domain of the *Penicillium funiculosum* xylanase cellobiohydrolase.

SEQ ID No. 8: XbaI-abfB-2 PCR primer.

SEQ ID No. 9: HindIII-abfB-2 PCR primer.

5

Description of the invention

The present invention relates to a polypeptide comprising a polypeptide chosen from the following polypeptides:

- the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2,
- the polypeptide whose sequence is between position 28 and position 400 of SEQ ID No. 2,
- a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity,
- a polypeptide having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity and exhibiting at least 80% identity with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.

The invention also relates to a polynucleotide, encoding an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity, chosen from the following polynucleotides:

- the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1,
- the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1,
- a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide according to Claim 1.

Another subject of the present invention is a polynucleotide having the sequence represented by SEQ ID No. 1 or the sequence complementary to SEQ ID No. 1.

The invention also relates to expression cassettes comprising, in the direction of transcription:

- a promoter that is functional in a host organism;

- a polynucleotide according to the invention;
and
- a terminator sequence that is functional in the
same host organism.

5

Another subject of the invention is a vector comprising a polynucleotide according to the invention and/or an expression cassette according to the invention.

10 The invention also relates to a host organism transformed with a polynucleotide according to the invention, an expression cassette according to the invention and/or a vector according to the invention.

15 In one embodiment of the invention, the host organism is chosen from yeasts and filamentous fungi.

Preferably, the host organism is a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain.

20

The invention also relates to a nutritional additive for animals, comprising a polypeptide according to the invention, a host organism according to the invention or a fermentation broth of a host organism according to
25 the invention.

Preferably, this nutritional additive is in liquid form or in powdered form.

30 Another aspect of the invention is a feedingstuff comprising a nutritional base for animals and a nutritional additive for animals according to the invention.

35 The invention also relates to the use of an ABFB polypeptide according to the invention or a host organism according to the invention for the manufacture

of a nutritional additive for animals or of a feedingstuff.

Another subject of the invention is the use of an ABFB polypeptide according to the invention or of a host organism according to the invention for hydrolysing the α -L-arabinofuranosyl bonds of arabinofuranosyl-oligosaccharide compounds.

10 Polypeptides

The present invention therefore relates to ABFB polypeptides having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, these polypeptides are isolated from *Penicillium funiculosum*.

15

The expression " α -L-arabinofuranosidase B" is understood to mean α -L-arabinofuranosidases (EC 3.2.1.55) type B (GH 54) which catalyse the hydrolysis of α -1,5, α -1,3 and α -1,2 bonds of the side chains contained in arabinofuranosyl-oligosaccharide compounds.

20

The polypeptides of the present invention are suitable for use in animal nutrition.

25

The expression "polypeptide suitable for use in animal nutrition" is understood to mean a polypeptide whose characteristics are such that it is suitable for animal nutrition. The characteristics essential for use in animal nutrition are in particular the pH and the temperature at which the enzyme is active. Indeed, the pH of the digestive system of the animals is acidic and it is therefore essential that the enzyme remains active at this pH, this being in order to preserve its activity in the hydrolysis of the L-arabinose residues. In addition, conditioning the enzyme in a nutritional additive or in the animal feed involves treatments and a temperature greater than room temperature. The

30

35

activity of the enzymes used must therefore be stable under the process conditions, and in particular the temperature conditions.

5 According to one embodiment of the present invention, the polypeptide exhibits an α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity at an acidic pH, for example less than 4.5, preferably less than 4. Also, according to one embodiment of the present invention,
10 the polypeptide exhibits an optimum α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity between pH 1.5 and pH 3.5.

According to a preferred embodiment of the present
15 invention, the polypeptide exhibits an α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity at temperatures greater than room temperature. Preferably, the polypeptide of the present invention has an optimum α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity at a temperature of between 30°C and 70°C,
20 more preferably between 40°C and 60°C.

The α -L-arabinofuranosidase B of the *Penicillium funiculosum* strain IMI378536 is represented in SEQ ID No. 2.

25 In a preferred embodiment, the polypeptides according to the invention are glycosylated. The polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 possesses in particular N-glycosylation sites at amino acid 123 and at amino acid 127. In a
30 preferred embodiment, the asparagin residues at position 123 and 127 of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 are glycosylated.

The α -L-arabinofuranosidase B of *Penicillium funiculosum* is an enzyme secreted by the fungus into
35 its extracellular environment. The polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 thus comprises a signal peptide of 27 amino acids. The subject of the invention is also the mature

polypeptide obtained after cleaving the signal peptide. In particular, the invention relates to the polypeptide whose sequence is between position 28 and position 400 of SEQ ID No. 2. In another embodiment, the signal peptide of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 may be replaced by a heterologous signal peptide for the expression and the secretion of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 by a heterologous host organism.

10 The invention also relates to fragments of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity.

The term "fragment" of a polypeptide denotes a polypeptide comprising a portion but not the entire polypeptide from which it is derived. The invention thus relates to a polypeptide comprising a fragment of at least 100, 200 or 300 amino acids of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.

20 This fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 preserves its α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity. The invention therefore relates to the biologically active fragments of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2. The term "biologically active fragment" denotes a fragment of a polypeptide preserving the function of the polypeptide from which it is derived. The biologically active fragments of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 thus preserve the function of the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 polypeptide. These biologically active fragments have an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, the ABFB fragments according to the invention possess a cellulose-binding domain. In a preferred embodiment, the cellulose binding domain has the sequence described in SEQ ID No. 3. Preferably, these fragments exhibit an optimal α -L-arabinofuranosidase activity at pH 2.6.

The methods for preparing fragments of a polypeptide and the techniques for measuring the α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity are well known to a person skilled in the art.

5

The subject of the invention is also polypeptides having an L-arabinofuranosidase B activity and exhibiting at least 90% identity with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2. Preferably, these polypeptides have the same properties and in particular the same catalytic properties as the polypeptides of SEQ ID No. 2. Preferably, these polypeptides are isolated from other strains of *Penicillium funiculosum* or from other filamentous fungi. Alternatively, these polypeptides may be obtained by site-directed mutagenesis techniques for example.

The subject of the invention is polypeptides having at least 80%, 90%, 95%, 98% and preferably at least 99% of amino acids that are identical with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.

The expression identical amino acids is understood to mean amino acids that are invariant or unchanged between two sequences. These polypeptides may exhibit a deletion, an addition or a substitution of at least one amino acid compared with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.

The subject of the invention is also polypeptides exhibiting at least 90%, 95%, 98% and preferably at least 99% similarity with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.

The expression similarity is understood to mean the measurement of the resemblance between proteic or nucleic sequences. These polypeptides may exhibit a deletion, an addition or a substitution of at least one

amino acid compared with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2. The degree of similarity between two sequences, quantified by a score, is based on the percentage sequence identity and/or sequence-preserving
5 substitutions.

Methods for measuring and identifying the degree of identity and the degree of similarity between polypeptides are known to persons skilled in the art.
10 It is possible to use for example Vector NTi 9.1.0, the alignment programme AlignX (Clustal W algorithm) (Invitrogen INFORMAX, <http://www.invitrogen.com>). Preferably, the default parameters are used.

15 The polypeptides according to the invention are isolated or purified from their natural environment. The polypeptides may be prepared by means of various methods. These methods are in particular purification from natural sources such as cells naturally expressing
20 these polypeptides, the production of recombinant polypeptides by appropriate host cells and their subsequent purification, production by chemical synthesis or, finally, a combination of these various approaches. These various methods of production are
25 well known to persons skilled in the art. Thus, the ABFB polypeptides of the present invention may be isolated from *Penicillium funiculosum*. In another embodiment, the ABFB polypeptides of the present invention are isolated from recombinant host organisms
30 expressing an ABFB polypeptide according to the invention.

The subject of the invention is also fusion proteins, recombinant proteins or chimeric proteins comprising
35 the polypeptides according to the invention. The term "polypeptide" also denotes modified proteins and polypeptides.

The polypeptides according to the present invention have an ABFB activity. Preferably, the polypeptides according to the invention possess a cellulose-binding domain. In a preferred embodiment, the cellulose binding domain has the sequence described in SEQ ID No. 3. Preferably, the polypeptides exhibit an optimal α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity at pH 2.6. Preferably, the polypeptides exhibit an optimal α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity at 50°C.

10

Polynucleotides

The invention also relates to polynucleotides encoding an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, these polynucleotides encode a *Penicillium funiculosum* α -L-arabinofuranosidase B.

15

According to the present invention, the expression "polynucleotide" is understood to mean a single-stranded nucleotide chain or its complementary DNA or RNA strand, or a double-stranded nucleotide chain which may be of the complementary or genomic DNA type. Preferably, the polynucleotides of the invention are of the DNA type, in particular double-stranded DNA. The term "polynucleotide" also denotes the modified polynucleotides.

20

25

The polynucleotides of the present invention are isolated or purified from their natural environment. Preferably, the polynucleotides of the present invention may be prepared by conventional molecular biology techniques as described by Sambrook et al. (Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, 1989) or by chemical synthesis.

30

In a first embodiment, the invention relates to the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1. This polynucleotide

35

encodes the *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 enzyme of SEQ ID No. 2.

5 In a second embodiment, the invention relates to the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1. This polynucleotide encodes the *Penicillium funiculosum* mature ABFB-2 polypeptide after cleavage of the signal peptide.

10 The invention also relates to polynucleotides having at least 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 95%, 98% and preferably at least 99% identity with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1 and/or with the polynucleotide whose
15 sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1. These polynucleotides encode an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, these polynucleotides encode a *Penicillium funiculosum* α -L-arabinofuranosidase B.

20 The expression identical nucleotides is understood to mean nucleotides that are invariant or unchanged between two sequences. These polynucleotides may exhibit a deletion, an addition or a substitution of at
25 least one nucleotide compared with the reference polynucleotide.

The invention also relates to polynucleotides exhibiting at least 70%, 75%, 80%, 85%, 90%, 95%, 98%
30 and preferably at least 99% similarity with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1 and/or with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1. These
35 polynucleotides encode an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, these polynucleotides encode a *Penicillium funiculosum* α -L-arabinofuranosidase B.

The expression similarity is understood to mean the measurement of the resemblance between protein or nucleic sequences. These polynucleotides may exhibit a deletion, an addition or a substitution of at least one nucleotide compared with the reference polynucleotide. The degree of similarity between two sequences, quantified by a score, is based on the percentage sequence identity and/or sequence-preserving substitution.

The methods for measuring and identifying the degree of identity and the degree of similarity between nucleic acid sequences are well known to persons skilled in the art. It is possible to use for example Vector NTi Vector NTi 9.1.0, an alignment programme AlignX (Clustal W algorithm) (Invitrogen INFORMAX, <http://www.invitrogen.com>). Preferably, the default parameters are used.

Preferably, the polynucleotides exhibiting a degree of similarity with a reference polynucleotide preserve the function of the reference sequence. In the present case, the polynucleotides encode an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity.

The invention also relates to polynucleotides capable of selectively hybridizing with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1 and/or with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1. Preferably, the selective hybridization is carried out under conditions of average stringency and preferably under conditions of high stringency. These polynucleotides encode an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. Preferably, these polynucleotides encode a *Penicillium funiculosum* α -L-arabinofuranosidase B.

The expression "sequence capable of selectively hybridizing" is understood to mean, according to the invention, the sequences which hybridize with the reference sequence at a level significantly above the background noise. The level of the signal generated by the interaction between the sequence capable of selectively hybridizing and the reference sequences is generally 10 times, preferably 100 times more intense than that of the interaction of the other DNA sequences generating the background noise. Stringent hybridization conditions allowing selective hybridization are well known to persons skilled in the art. In general, the hybridization and washing temperature is at least 5°C less than the T_m of the reference sequence at a given pH and for a given ionic strength. Typically, the hybridization temperature is at least 30°C for a polynucleotide of 15 to 50 nucleotides and at least 60°C for a polynucleotide of more than 50 nucleotides. By way of example, the hybridization is carried out in the following buffer: 6× SSC, 50 mM Tris-HCl (pH 7.5), 1 mM EDTA, 0.02% PVP, 0.02% Ficoll, 0.02% BSA, 500 µg/ml denatured salmon sperm DNA. The washings are for example carried out successively at low stringency in a 2× SSC, 0.1% SDS buffer, at average stringency in a 0.5× SSC, 0.1% SDS buffer and at high stringency in a 0.1× SSC, 0.1% SDS buffer. The hybridization may of course be carried out according to other customary methods well known to persons skilled in the art (see in particular Sambrook et al., Molecular Cloning: A Laboratory Manual, 1989). Preferably, the polynucleotides selectively hybridizing with a reference polynucleotide preserving the function of the reference sequence. In the present case, the polynucleotides, which selectively hybridize with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1 and/or with the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349

and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1, encode an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity.

5 The invention generally relates to the polynucleotides encoding the polypeptides according to the invention. Because of the degeneracy of the genetic code, various polynucleotides can encode the same polypeptide.

10 Another subject of the present invention is a polynucleotide whose sequence is represented in SEQ ID No. 1. The polynucleotide of SEQ ID No. 1 comprises sequences flanking the open reading frame (ORF) of the *Penicillium funiculosum* *abfB-2* gene. They are in particular promoter and terminator sequences of the
15 *abfB-2* gene. The *abfB* gene may be expressed from its homologous regulatory sequences, in particular for overexpression in *Penicillium funiculosum* or in other filamentous fungi.

20 In another embodiment, the *abfB* gene may be expressed in various host organisms such as bacteria, yeasts and fungi for example. The *abfB* gene may be expressed in a host organism under the control of the promoter of SEQ ID No. 1 of the present invention or under the control
25 of a heterologous promoter.

Expression cassettes

According to one embodiment of the invention, a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide according to the
30 invention is inserted into an expression cassette using cloning techniques well known to persons skilled in the art. This expression cassette comprises the elements necessary for the transcription and the translation of the sequences encoding the polypeptides according to
35 the invention.

Advantageously, this expression cassette comprises both elements which make it possible to cause a host cell to

produce a polypeptide and elements necessary for the regulation of this expression.

These expression cassettes comprise, in the direction
5 of transcription:

- a promoter that is functional in a host organism;
- a polynucleotide according to the invention;
- a terminator sequence that is functional in the
10 same host organism.

Any type of promoter sequence may be used in the expression cassettes according to the invention. The choice of the promoter will depend in particular on the
15 host organism chosen for the expression of the gene of interest. Some promoters allow a constitutive expression whereas other promoters are on the contrary inducible. Among the promoters that are functional in fungi, there may be mentioned in particular that for
20 *Aspergillus nidulans* glyceraldehyde-3-phosphate dehydrogenase (Roberts et al., Current Genet. 15: 177-180, 1989). Among the promoters that are functional in bacteria, there may be mentioned in particular that for the T7 bacteriophage RNA polymerase (Studier et al.,
25 Methods in enzymology 185: 60-89, 1990). Among the promoters that are functional in yeasts, there may be mentioned the promoter for the *GAL1* gene (Elledge et al., Proc Natl Acad Sciences, USA. 88: 1731-1735, 1991) or the *S. cerevisiae* *GAL4* and *ADH* promoters. All these
30 promoters are described in the literature and are well known to persons skilled in the art.

For expression in *Penicillium funiculosum*, expression cassettes will be chosen for example that comprise a
35 histone H4.B promoter, an aspartyl acid protease promoter or a *cs113* promoter (WO 00/68401).

The expression cassettes according to the present invention may additionally include any other sequence necessary for the expression of the polypeptides or polynucleotides, such as for example regulatory elements or signal sequences allowing the secretion of the polypeptides produced by the host organism. It is possible to use in particular any regulatory sequence that makes it possible to increase the level of expression of the coding sequence inserted into the expression cassette. According to the invention, it is possible to use in particular, in combination with the regulatory promoter sequence, other regulatory sequences, which are located between the promoter and the coding sequence, such as transcription activators ("enhancer").

A wide variety of terminator sequences can be used in the expression cassettes according to the invention, these sequences allow the termination of transcription and the polyadenylation of the mRNA. Any terminator sequence that is functional in the selected host organism may be used.

For expression in *Penicillium funiculosum*, expression cassettes will be chosen for example that comprise a histone H4.B terminator, an aspartyl acid protease terminator or a csl13 terminator (WO 00/68401).

The subject of the present invention is also a polynucleotide comprising an expression cassette according to the invention, advantageously the expression cassettes according to the present invention are inserted into a vector.

35 Vectors

The present invention therefore also relates to replicating or expression vectors for transforming a host organism comprising at least one polynucleotide or

one expression cassette according to the present invention. This vector may correspond in particular to a plasmid, a cosmid, a bacteriophage or a virus into which a polynucleotide or an expression cassette
5 according to the invention has been inserted. The techniques for constructing these vectors and for inserting a polynucleotide of the invention into these vectors are well known to persons skilled in the art. In general, it is possible to use any vector capable of
10 maintaining itself, self-replicating or propagating in a host cell in order to induce in particular the expression of a polynucleotide or of a polypeptide. Persons skilled in the art will choose the appropriate vectors according to the host organism to be
15 transformed, and according to the transformation technique used.

The vectors of the present invention are used in particular to transform a host organism for replication
20 of the vector and/or the expression of a polypeptide according to the invention in the host organism.

The invention also relates to a method for preparing a polypeptide according to the invention comprising the
25 following steps:

- a host organism is transformed with an expression vector comprising an expression cassette according to the invention and/or with a polynucleotide according to the invention,
30 - the polypeptides produced by the host organism are isolated.

Host organisms

The subject of the present invention is also a method
35 for transforming a host organism by integrating into the said host organism at least one polynucleotide or an expression cassette or a vector according to the invention. The polynucleotide may be integrated into

the genome of the host organism or can stably replicate in the host organism. Methods for transforming the host organisms are well known to persons skilled in the art and are well described in the literature.

5

The present invention also relates to a host organism transformed with a polynucleotide, an expression cassette or a vector according to the invention. The expression host organism is understood to mean in particular according to the invention any mono- or pluricellular, lower or higher, organism, chosen from bacteria, yeasts and fungi. The expression host organism is understood to mean a non-human organism. Advantageously, the yeasts are chosen from *Pichia pastoris*, *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, *Yarrowia lipolytica* and *Schwanniomyces occidentalis*. The fungi are chosen from *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium*, preferably from *Penicillium funiculosum*, *Trichoderma reesei*, *Aspergillus niger*, *Aspergillus awamori*, *Aspergillus kawachii* and *Trichoderma koningii*. In a preferred embodiment, the host organism is a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain in which an ABFB polypeptide according to the invention is expressed or overexpressed.

25

The techniques for constructing vectors, transforming host organisms and expressing heterologous proteins in these organisms are widely described in the literature (Ausubel F.M. et al., "Current Protocols in Molecular Biology" Volumes 1 and 2, Greene Publishing Associates and Wiley Interscience, 1989; T. Maniatis, E.F. Fritsch, J. Sambrook, Molecular Cloning A laboratory Handbook, 1982).

35 Food additives and feedingstuffs

The present invention therefore relates to food additives providing an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity. The intake of this type of enzymatic activity

makes it possible to enhance the digestibility of the food and to increase its nutritional value.

The expression nutritional additive is understood to mean a substance that is intentionally added to a food, generally in small quantities, in order to improve its digestibility or its nutritional characteristics. The nutritional additives for animals may contain for example vitamins, mineral salts, amino acids and enzymes.

Typically, the nutritional additives for animals comprise a polypeptide according to the invention, a host organism according to the invention or a fermentation broth of a host organism according to the invention. Thus, the polypeptides having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity according to the invention can be purified or isolated from a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain or from a recombinant host organism for the manufacture of a nutritional additive for animals. Alternatively, a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain or a host organism producing AbfB polypeptides may be used directly for the manufacture of a nutritional additive for animals. In a preferred embodiment of the invention, the culture supernatant or fermentation broth of a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain or of a host organism according to the invention is used for the manufacture of nutritional additives for animals. This embodiment is particularly advantageous when the ABFB polypeptides are secreted by the *Penicillium funiculosum* strain or the host organism. Usually, this culture supernatant is concentrated or freeze-dried for the manufacture of the nutritional additive.

Accordingly, the invention also relates to a method for preparing an ABFB enzyme comprising the following steps:

- a) culturing a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain or a transformed host organism according to the invention under conditions for inducing the expression of ABFBs,
- 5 b) separating the culture supernatant comprising the ABFB enzyme.

This culture supernatant or fermentation broth may then be concentrated or freeze-dried for the formulation of
10 a food additive or of a feedingstuff.

If the host organism does not secrete the ABFB enzyme in the culture medium, an additional step of opening the cells and purifying the cellular extract may be
15 necessary.

The nutritional additives of the present invention comprise an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity but may also comprise other nutritional substances such as
20 vitamins, amino acids or mineral salts.

The additives according to the invention increase the digestibility of the feedingstuffs, thus contributing to a better enhancement of the nutritional value of
25 diets based on cereals (wheat, barley, maize, oat, rye and the like) and on oilcakes (soybean, sunflower, rapeseed and the like) in particular.

The present invention also relates to the feedingstuffs comprising a nutritional base and a nutritional
30 additive according to the invention. These feedingstuffs are usually provided in the form of meals or granules into which the additives according to the invention are incorporated.

35 The expression feedingstuff is understood to mean anything that can serve as food for animals.

The feedingstuffs comprise a polypeptide according to the invention, a host organism according to the invention or a fermentation broth of a host organism according to the invention.

5

For intensive animal breeding, these feedingstuffs usually comprise a nutritional base and nutritional additives.

10 The expression nutritional base is understood to mean what constitutes the main part of the animal feed ration, consisting by way of example of a mixture of cereals, proteins and fat of animal and/or plant origin.

15

The nutritional bases for animals are suitable as feed for these animals and are well known to persons skilled in the art. Usually, these nutritional bases comprise, for example, maize, wheat, pea and soybean. These
20 nutritional bases are suitable for the needs of the various animal species for which they are intended. These nutritional bases may already contain nutritional additives such as vitamins, mineral salts and amino acids.

25

In a preferred embodiment, the invention relates to feedingstuffs for monogastric animals and in particular for poultry and pigs. Poultry comprises in particular laying hens, broilers, turkeys and ducks. Pigs comprise
30 in particular growing-finishing pigs and piglets.

Description of the figures

Figure 1: Organizational diagram of the fungal
35 cellulose-binding domain (fCBD).

Figure 2: Determination of the optimum pH of the ABFB-2 enzyme in a McIlvaine buffer series (pH 2.2 to 8) at 40°C in the presence of 5 mM PNPAF.

Figure 3: Determination of the optimum temperature for the ABFB-2 enzyme at its optimum pH in the presence of 5 mM PNPAF.

Figure 4: Determination of the kinetic constants K_m and V_m ($1/V_i = f(1/S)$) for ABFB-2 for a PNPAF range from 0.5 mM to 5 mM at pH 2.6 and 50°C.

Figure 5: Values of differential expression of the *abfB-1* and *abfB-2* genes according to the *P. funiculosum* growth conditions.

Figure 6: Kinetics of the disappearance of ABFB-2 in the reaction supernatant. The adhesion of the enzyme to the cell is monitored by measuring the free residual α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity of ABFB-2.

Examples

Analysis of the structure of the ABFB-2 gene

ABFB-2 exhibits less than 62% identity with other ABFB enzymes of filamentous fungi although these enzymes are in general fairly conserved. This difference in identity is explained by the identification of two distinct regions. In the N-terminal part, a region specific for arabinofuranosidases (10 aa up to 341 aa) and in the C-terminal region, a fungal type cellulose-binding domain fCBD which was predicted by SMART (Simple Modular Architectural Research Tool) analysis between position 367 and 400 aa. According to the literature, this type of binding domain is generally found in enzymes involved in the degradation of cellulose, such as endoglucanases (EC 3.2.1.4), cellobiohydrolases (EC 3.2.1.91) (exoglucanases) or xylanases (EC 3.2.1.8). This is the first time that a CBD domain has been found for an arabinofuranosidase.

From a structural (primary sequence) point of view, cellulases and xylanases consist of two distinct domains, a catalytic domain and a CBD domain linked by a so-called low complexity short sequence rich in

proline and/or in hydroxylated amino acid (Serine and Threonine). The cellulose-binding domains have been studied in a number of fungal cellulases, and they are characterized by a sequence of up to 36 amino acids, present at the N-terminal end (cbh-II or egl2) or C-terminal end of the protein (cbh-I, egl1 or egl5). Furthermore, this type of domain is characterized by the conservation of 4 cysteines according to Figure 1 which allow the formation of disulfide bridges.

The predicted fCBD domain for *Penicillium funiculosum* ABFB-2 is composed of 34 amino acids including the 4 conserved cysteines (THWGQCGGSGYSGPTSCVAPYACTTANPYAQCL).

This domain is preceded by a characteristic short sequence of 23 amino acids of low complexity (STSPGSHTTSTTLTTITSTTAVS), rich in amino acids bearing a hydroxyl (10 threonines and 6 serines). In *Penicillium funiculosum*, this type of domain has been described in three other enzymes, endo-1,4-xylanase, cellobiohydrolase and ferulic acid esterase (cyanomyl esterase). The alignment of these four domains confirms the conservation and the location of the 4 cysteines within the fCBD.

	496	529
ABFB_2 P.funiculosum (367)	THWGQCGGSGYSGPTSCVAPYACTTANPYAQCL	
cyanomyl esterase (320)	AHWAQCGGIGYSECTACASPYTCQKANDYYSQCL	
Endo 1-4 Xylanase D_P.f (374)	AHWGQCGGIGWSGPTICVSPYTCQVLNPYYSQCL	
xylanase cellobiohydrolase (496)	AHWGQCGGQSWTGPITTCASGTTCTVVPYYSQCL	

Alignment of the known fCBDs in
Penicillium funiculosum

This type of binding domain has been widely described in cellulolytic enzymes (cellulases). The analysis of the primary sequence of fCBD by blast alignment, against known fCBD sequences, identifies a very strong

homology with the cellulose-binding domains of cellobiohydrolase types I and II, and with the domains of endoglucanases types I, II and V derived from *Trichoderma reesei* and *Aspergillus niger*. The 3 tyrosine residues, and the asparagine and glutamine residues, identified as being essential for the functionality of the domain, are conserved within the ABFB-2 sequence. Studies of the structure/function relationship show that this type of domain plays a predominant role in the depolymerization of cellulose (Linder, M. & Teeri, T. T. (1997) The roles and function of cellulose-binding domains, J. Biotechnol. 57 15-28) by increasing the binding affinity of the enzyme for its substrate. In *T. reesei*, cellobiohydrolase I (CBH I) in the absence of its fCBD domain exhibits a conserved catalytic activity, but the binding affinity of the enzyme for cellulose is very substantially reduced.

This is the first time that a binding domain of this type has been identified in an arabinofuranosidase type B in a filamentous fungus. The presence of this binding domain increases the affinity of the enzyme for its substrate and consequently makes it possible to enhance the degradation of insoluble cellulose.

Development of the assay of the L-arabinofuranosidase B activity

The L-arabinofuranosidase activity was measured from a *P. funiculosum* culture on M2 medium with a mixed addition composed of 0.15% provasoy and 0.3% cellulose after 40 h. Samples were collected at 48 h and 72 h of culture. The culture was performed in a 200 ml Erlenmeyer flask with a useful volume of 50 ml. The activity was determined by hydrolysing 5 mM para-nitrophenyl-(L-arabinofuranoside (PNPAF) in a 50 mM sodium acetate buffer, pH 5. 50 µl of culture

supernatant were incubated with 250 µl of substrate preheated at 50°C for 15 min. The reaction was stopped by adding 500 µl of 0.5 M NaOH. The release of p-nitrophenyl (PNP) is measured at 405 nm with a molar extinction coefficient of 17 000 M⁻¹.cm⁻¹. An enzyme unit is defined as the quantity of enzyme which hydrolyses 1 µmol of PNPAF per minute under the conditions described above. For the culture of *P. funiculosum*, we obtained 20 mU.ml⁻¹ after 48 h and 112 mU.ml⁻¹ after 72 h of culture. These results are in agreement with the literature, indeed for *Aspergillus niger*, activities of the order of 100 to 600 mU.ml⁻¹ were observed according to the inducer used in the culture.

Cloning of *P. funiculosum* abfB-2 ORF and transformation in *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*

Starting with genomic DNA from *P. funiculosum*, the *abfB-2* gene was amplified by PCR with the aid of the pair of primers (HindIII-*abfB-2*/XbaI-*abfB-2*). The following PCR conditions were applied (94°C 30 sec; 62°C 30 sec; 1 min 30 sec at 72°C) for 30 cycles. The PCR product of 1215 bp was cloned into a commercial vector pGEM-T(tm)easy.

Sequence of the PCR primer pair

XbaI-*abfB-2*: >5'-TCTAGAATGACGTCCAAACATAGTT-3'<

HindIII-*abfB-2*: >5'-AAGCTTCTAGAGACATTGAGCGTA-3'<

The HindIII/XbaI fragment of 1215 bp was excised from the vector pGEM-T and subcloned at the HindIII/XbaI sites into a shuttle vector (plac195-PGK/CYC1). For heterologous expression, the *abfB-2* gene is therefore under the control of the constitutive PGK promoter of the gene encoding phosphoglycerate kinase (*S. cerevisiae*) and the CYC1 terminator (*S. cerevisiae*)

of the gene encoding a cytochrome C oxidase activity. The new expression vector is called pOT-02.

The *S. cerevisiae* strain JF #1194 (CEN.PK113-5D), a clone derived from the strain CEN.PK 122 carrying the ura 3-52 auxotrophy, was transformed (lithium acetate/heat shock method) with the expression vector pOT-02. The transformant strains were selected by phenotype complementation on uracil-free selective plates (*URA3* marker).

Six transformants were selected in order to test for the presence of an arabinofuranosidase B activity in the culture supernatant. The transformants were cultured in 50 ml of uracil-free minimum medium (except the wild-type control strain) for 24 hours. The arabinofuranosidase activity was assayed on the culture supernatants with the aid of the method described in the preceding paragraph.

Determination of the optimum pH

The *abfB-2* gene encoding an arabinofuranosidase B activity derived from *P. funiculosus* was cloned into *S. cerevisiae*. After checking for the presence of an arabinofuranosidase B activity in several transformants, a transformant was chosen and the ABFB activity was assayed on the culture supernatant after 24 h of growth. The cultures were carried out in a 200 ml Erlenmeyer flask (working volume 50 ml). The activity was determined in the presence of 5 mM p-nitrophenyl- α -L-arabinofuranoside (PNPAF) in a McIlvaine buffer series (pH 2.2 to 8.0). 80 μ l of culture supernatant were incubated with 320 μ l of substrate preheated at 40°C for 10 min. The reaction was stopped by adding 1 ml of 1M Na₂CO₃. The release of p-nitrophenyl is measured at 405 nm⁻¹. One enzyme unit is defined as the quantity of enzyme which hydrolyses

1 μmol of PNPAF per minute. The activity curve is represented in **Figure 2**. ABFB-2 has an activity optimum at pH 2.6 and preserves 55% of its activity at pH 3.8. This is the first time that such a low optimum pH has been observed for an arabinofurnasidase and that it has 68% activity at pH 1.5 in a 50mM HCL solution.

10 Determination of the optimum temperature

Using the same protocol, we determined the optimum temperature for the activity of ABFB-2. The enzyme was incubated for 10 min at each of the temperatures in a 15 McIlvaine buffer at pH 2.6. The activity curve is presented in **Figure 3**.

An optimum temperature range for ABFBs is described in the literature as being between 40 and 60°C. The 20 *P. funiculosum* ABFB-2 has an activity optimum at 50°C. If the optimum pH and temperature of the enzyme are selected (pH 2.6 and 50°C), it is observed that the activity for ABFB-2 is 20 times as high as the activity determined in an acetate buffer pH 5 and 40°C (305 mU 25 vs 15 mU).

Determination of K_m and V_m

For each of the two, the kinetic constants (K_m and V_m) 30 for ABFB-2 were determined by measuring the hydrolysis of PNPAF over time, under the optimum conditions determined above.

The substrate (PNPAF) concentration ranges were 35 established between 0.5 and 5 mM in a pH 2.6 buffer. The kinetics of hydrolysis was monitored for 10 minutes at 50°C. So as to obtain the kinetic constants for both enzymes, the results were treated according to the

double inverse method (Lineweark and Burk) and are presented in **Figure 4**.

The kinetic constants were determined by hydrolysis of PNPAF under optimum conditions. The K_m value is 0.7 mM for ABFB-2. By comparison, in the literature, the K_m values for this type of enzyme varies from 0.05 to 1.2 mM according to the genus and the fungal species studied. ABFB-2 has a maximum speed of hydrolysis (V_m) of 328 mol PNPAF/mol of enzyme/min, under the conditions described above.

Determination of the molecular weight of the ABFB-2 enzyme

In order to determine the molecular weight of the ABFB-2 enzyme, the culture supernatant, derived from the growth of a mutant (*S. cerevisiae*) in a minimum medium, was concentrated 200-fold, denatured by boiling at 100°C for 5 min, and then deposited in an SDS-polyacrylamide gel.

It is observed that the quantity of extracellular proteins is extremely low in the wild-type strain. For the mutants, the ABFB-2 enzyme is secreted into the culture supernatant. It is predominant in relation to the basal level of the *S. cerevisiae* extracellular proteins. The electrophoretic band obtained for the ABFB enzyme is diffuse which suggests a strong glycosylation of the enzyme.

The determination of the molecular weight was carried out with the aid of the size marker SeeBlue (Invitrogen). The results are presented in Table 1.

	Predicted MW	MW estimated on gel
ABFB-2	41	55

Table 1: ABFB-2 molecular weight in KDa

We compared the molecular weight predicted by the
5 algorithm Vector NTi and the weight obtained by
electrophoretic migration in a denaturing SDS-PAGE gel.
We observed an overestimation of the molecular weight
of the enzyme in the SDS-PAGE gel. A high glycosylation
10 of the enzyme is indeed suggested by the visualization
on gel of a diffuse electrophoretic band (O and N
glycosylations). The glycosylations occur during the
processing of the proteins in the expressing organism.

15 **Analysis of the profile of expression of the *abfB-2***
gene in *Penicillium funiculosum*

Penicillium funiculosum possesses two genes encoding B
 α -L-arabinofuranosidases: the *abfB-1* and *abfB-2* genes.
The profiles of expression of these genes under various
20 *P. funiculosum* culture conditions were compared.

P. funiculosum was cultured under conditions for
inducing cellulolytic and hemicellulolytic enzymes
(type M2 industrial growth medium) and under non-
25 producing conditions (minimum glucose medium M0). After
40 h of growth, the cultures were stopped, the mycelium
was recovered, and the total RNAs were extracted. The
quantity and the quality of the RNAs were assessed by
measuring the absorbance at 260 nm and at 280 nm
30 (260/280 ratio > 1.8). The level of transcripts
encoding the B-type arabinofuranosidase (*ABFB-1* and
ABFB-2) activities were quantified under each of the
two conditions (M0 and M2) by real-time quantitative
PCR.

The gene encoding *P. funiculosum* tubulin (*tub-1*) was used as a control under the two conditions. This gene encodes a structural protein that is essential for the integrity of the cell. This gene is commonly used as the reference gene because it exhibits a constant level of expression regardless of the culture condition used (ubiquitous).

Specific primers for quantitative PCR were designed for each of the genes (*abfB-1*, *abfB-2* and *tub-1*). For both growth conditions (M0 and M2), 2 µg of total RNA were retrotranscribed. A series of dilutions of the complementary DNAs derived from the retrotranscription were carried out in order to determine the optimum conditions for amplification of the target genes (constraints of the quantitative PCR method and for the efficiency of these pairs of primers).

The normalized results are presented in Table 2 and Figure 5.

	M0	M2
abfb_1	1	107
abfb_2	1	1.27

Table 2: Values for differential expression of the *abfB-1* and *abfB-2* genes as a function of the *P. funiculosum* growth conditions

The transcriptional regulations of the genes encoding cellulolytic and hemicellulolytic activities have been described. The expression of these genes is highly subject to the nature and/or to the complexity of the carbon and nitrogen source on which the microorganism is cultured. A high transcriptional repression of these genes has been reported in the presence of glucose. This regulation is performed via a catabolic repression protein CreA which specifically binds to the promoter

of these genes and blocks their transcription. In our experiment for quantifying, by PCR, the *abfB-1* and *abfB-2* messengers, that the level of expression of these two genes under the glucose (M0) condition is very low. This is in agreement with the literature since it has been shown that these genes have a basal level of expression even under unfavourable conditions (absence of cellulolytic and/or hemicellulolytic substrates). The results obtained for the M0 condition are in agreement with the literature. Unlike the *abfB-1* gene, the expression of the *abfB-2* gene is not induced under industrial conditions. This suggests that the enzymatic cocktails produced by *Penicillium funiculosum* could be improved by obtaining the expression of ABFB-2 by the fungus under industrial conditions or by adding exogenous ABFB-2 to the enzymatic cocktail produced.

Determination of the functionality of fCBD

To verify the functionality of the fCBD domain, tests for the binding of the ABFB-2 enzyme were carried out on microcrystalline cellulose.

The enzyme was mixed volume for volume with 0.5% of microcrystalline cellulose in a 100 mM Tris-HCl buffer, pH 7.5 at 4°C. The adhesion of the protein was monitored by measuring the residual arabinofuranosidase B activity in the presence of PNPAF under the optimal hydrolysis conditions determined. After various periods of contact between the enzyme and the cellulose, the mixture is centrifuged and the decrease in the concentration of ABFB-2 protein is monitored by measuring the arabinofuranosidase B activity in the supernatant. The binding tests were performed in the presence of a control reaction containing the ABFB-2 enzyme, under the same experimental conditions but in the absence of microcrystalline cellulose. A second control was carried out by incubating the ABFB-1 enzyme

under the same reaction conditions in the presence of microcrystalline cellulose. The results obtained are presented in Figure 6.

5 We can therefore observe that the fungal type
cellulose-binding domain (fCBD) of the enzyme ABFB-2
derived from *P. funiculosum* is functional. The adhesion
of the enzyme was monitored after 10 and 45 minutes of
contact. After incubating for 10 minutes, 70% of the
10 total quantity of the enzyme initially present has
adhered to the microcrystalline cellulose. After 45
minutes, 80% of the entire enzyme present in the
reaction with cellulose has adhered. These data suggest
that the equilibrium of the contact reaction was
15 reached very rapidly and that the kinetics of adhesion
of the enzyme most certainly follows a kinetic law of
order 1 relative to the substrate within the first 10
minutes.

CLAIMS

1. Polypeptide, characterized in that it comprises a polypeptide chosen from the following polypeptides:
 - 5 - the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2,
 - the polypeptide whose sequence is between position 28 and position 400 of SEQ ID No. 2,
 - a fragment of the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2 having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity,
 - 10 - a polypeptide having an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity and exhibiting at least 80% identity with the polypeptide of SEQ ID No. 2.
2. Polynucleotide encoding an α -L-arabinofuranosidase B activity, characterized in that it is chosen from the following polynucleotides:
 - the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 268 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1,
 - the polynucleotide whose sequence is between position 349 and position 1470 of SEQ ID No. 1,
 - 20 - a polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide according to Claim 1.
3. Polynucleotide, characterized in that it has the sequence of SEQ ID No. 1 or the sequence complementary to SEQ ID No. 1.
4. Expression cassette, characterized in that it comprises, in the direction of transcription:
 - 30 - a promoter that is functional in a host organism;
 - a polynucleotide according to Claim 2; and
 - a terminator sequence in the same host organism.
- 35 5. Vector comprising a polynucleotide according to one of Claims 2-3 and/or an expression cassette according to Claim 4.

6. Host organism transformed with a polynucleotide according to one of Claims 2-3, an expression cassette according to Claim 4 and/or a vector according to Claim 5.
7. Host organism according to Claim 6, characterized in that the host organism is chosen from yeasts and filamentous fungi.
8. Host organism according to Claim 7, characterized in that it is a *Penicillium funiculosum* strain.
9. Nutritional additive for animals, characterized in that it comprises a polypeptide according to Claim 1.
10. Nutritional additive for animals, characterized in that it comprises a host organism according to one of Claims 6-8 and/or a fermentation broth of a host organism according to one of Claims 6-8.
11. Nutritional additive for animals according to one of Claims 9-10, characterized in that it is in liquid form or in powdered form.
12. Feedingstuff, characterized in that it comprises a nutritional base for animals and a nutritional additive for animals according to one of Claims 9-11.
13. Use of a polypeptide according to Claim 1 or of a host organism according to one of Claims 6-8 for the manufacture of a nutritional additive for animals or of a feedingstuff.
14. Use of a polypeptide according to Claim 1 or of a host organism according to one of Claims 6-8, for hydrolysing the α -L-arabinofuranosyl bonds of arabinofuranosyl-oligosaccharide compounds.