of the present invention is to provide lactic acid bacteria having high oxalic acid degradation ability, processed materials of the lactic acid bacteria, methods for degrading oxalic acid or oxalate compounds, and methods for producing compositions with reduced oxalic acid or oxalate compounds. Another objective is to provide compositions comprising the lactic acid bacteria or processed materials thereof, or agents for degrading oxalic acid or oxalate compounds.

[Summary]

In a first aspect, there is provided a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus*, having an oxalic acid degradation rate of 28% or more when cultured at 37°C for 4 hours in a culture medium containing 5 mM oxalic acid at pH 4 at the start of culture wherein the lactic acid bacterium is selected from the group consisting of (a) to (d) below:
(a) the *Lactobacillus gasseri* OLL2727 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11004;
(b) the *Lactobacillus amylovorus* OLL2880 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11006;
(c) the *Lactobacillus gasseri* OLL203195 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11005; and
(d) the *Lactobacillus amylovorus* OLL2741 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11007.

In a second aspect, there is provided a processed material of the lactic acid bacterium as defined above.

In a third aspect, there is provided a composition comprising the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above.

In a fourth aspect, there is provided the use of the composition as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing renal/urinary calculus.

In a fifth aspect, there is provided the use of the composition as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing anemia.

In a sixth aspect, there is provided the use of the composition as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing osteoporosis.

In a seventh aspect, there is provided an agent for degrading oxalic acid or an oxalate compound, comprising the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above.

In an eighth aspect, there is provided a method for degrading oxalic acid or an oxalate compound, wherein the method comprises the step of contacting oxalic acid or an oxalate compound with the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above.

In a ninth aspect, there is provided a method for producing a composition with reduced level of oxalic acid or oxalate compound, wherein the method comprises the step of contacting a composition comprising the oxalic acid or the oxalate compound with the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above.

In a tenth aspect, there is provided the use of the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing renal/urinary calculus.

In an eleventh aspect, there is provided the use of the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing anemia.

In a twelfth aspect, there is provided the use of the lactic acid bacterium as defined above, or the processed material as defined above in the manufacture of a medicament for treating and/or preventing osteoporosis.

[Means for Solving the Problems]

As a result of dedicated research to solve the above-mentioned objectives, the present inventors isolated lactic acid bacteria having an oxalic acid-degrading activity several times higher than those of known lactic acid bacteria with oxalic acid-degrading activity, and thereby completed the present invention. Specifically, they carried out dedicated selection to obtain lactic acid bacteria that are capable of degrading a large quantity of oxalic acid. Lactic acid bacteria that are capable of degrading a large quantity of oxalic acid were screened from 132 strains of *Lactobacillus* lactic acid bacteria that have been independently isolated from feces and gastric juices of human adults. As a result, the present inventors found lactic acid bacteria that have an oxalic acid degradation rate of 50% or more when cultured at 37°C for 72 hours in a culture medium containing 10 mM oxalic acid at pH 6.5 at the start of culture, and thereby completed the present invention.

More specifically, the present invention provides the following:

[1] a lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus*, having an oxalic acid degradation rate of 50% or more when cultured at 37°C for 72 hours in a culture medium containing 10 mM oxalic acid at pH 6.5 at the start of culture;

[2] the lactic acid bacterium of [1], wherein the lactic acid bacterium belonging to the genus *Lactobacillus* is the *Lactobacillus gasseri* species or the *Lactobacillus amylovorus* species;

[3] a lactic acid bacterium selected from the group consisting of (a) to (d) below:

(a) the *Lactobacillus gasseri* OLL203195 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11005;

(b) the *Lactobacillus amylovorus* OLL2741 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11007;

(c) the *Lactobacillus amylovorus* OLL2880 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11006; and

(d) the *Lactobacillus gasseri* OLL2727 strain, which is a lactic acid bacterium deposited under Accession No. FERM BP-11004;

[4] a processed material of the lactic acid bacterium of any one of [1] to [3];

[5] a composition comprising the lactic acid bacterium of [1], [2], or [3], or the processed material of [4];