CLAIMS

1. A method for the manufacture of recombinant antibody molecules comprising

   a) culturing a host cell sample of gram-negative bacteria transformed with an expression vector encoding a recombinant antibody molecule;

   b) adding an extraction buffer to the sample; and

   c) subjecting the sample to a heat treatment step within a range of 40°C to 70°C for 1 to 24 hours;

   characterized in that the pH of the sample is detected after addition of the extraction buffer to ensure that the pH of the sample is 7 to 9 prior to the heat treatment step.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the pH is detected before and during the heat up phase.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the pH is lower during than before the heat up phase.

4. The method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein pH of the sample is monitored continuously from the point of adding the extraction buffer to the start of heat the treatment step.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein pH of the sample is monitored continuously during the treatment step.

6. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein heat treatment step is performed within the range of 40°C to 65°C.

7. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the extraction buffer is selected from the group comprising NaOH, NH_4OH, sulphuric acid, EDTA, Tris buffer and combinations thereof.

8. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 7, wherein the antibody is specific for an antigen selected from integrins, interleukins, interferons, viral antigens, TNF, colony-stimulating factors and platelet-derived growth factors.

9. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the antibody molecule is selected from the group comprising VH, VL, VHH, Fab, modified Fab, an altered hinge Fab, Fab', $F(ab')_2$ or Fv fragment; a light chain or heavy chain monomer or dimer; a single chain antibody, e.g. a single chain Fv in which the heavy and light chain variable

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2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the pH is detected before and during a heat up phase.

3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the pH is lower during than before the heat up phase.

4. The method according to claim 1, 2 or 3, wherein pH of the sample is monitored continuously from the point of adding the extraction buffer to the start of the heat treatment step.

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6. The method according to any one of claims 1 to 5, wherein heat treatment step is performed within the range of 40°C to 65°C.

7 The method according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the extraction buffer is selected from the group comprising NaOH, NH_4OH, sulphuric acid, EDTA, Tris buffer and combinations thereof.

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