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ABSTRACT

REMOVAL OF LIVESTOCK ODORANTS USING DIELECTRIC BARRIER DISCHARGE REACTOR AND BYPRODUCTS FORMATION

Xianwang Kong¹, Dezhao Liu^{1*}, Zhen Cai¹, Zhen Liu², Keping Yan²

1. Key Laboratory of Equipment and Informatization in Environment Controlled Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, College of Biosystems Engineering and Food Science, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou 310058, China

2. College of Chemical and Biological Engineering, Zhejiang University, China

Non-thermal plasma technology has proved to be efficient for treating various gas pollutants from industrial sectors, with very few cases applied for odorants removal from livestock. This lab-scale study was performed to investigate the removal of typical livestock odorants in a dielectric barrier discharge reactor (DBD) and its byproducts formation.

The DBD reactor was a cylindrical quartz tube inserted with a stainless steel rod as electrode, resulting a discharge gap of 2 mm. Four specific energy density (SED, 56.5, 97.1 112.9 and 143.8 J L⁻¹) were evaluated at gas residence time of ca. 0.2 s. The tested odorants were NH₃, organic acids (acetic acid, propionic acid, butyric acid, *n*-valeric acid), sulfur compounds (H₂S, dimethyl sulfide, dimethyl disulfide, dimethyl trisulfide), phenols (*p*-cresol, 4-ethylphenol) and indoles (indole, skatole).

Preliminary results showed that: NH₃ (6.2-41.2 ppmv inlet) and H₂S (930 and 1854 ppbv inlet) were sufficiently removed (>95%) at all SED, while SO₂ was detected as a byproduct following H₂S removal. As for VOCs, increased SED in general had positive effect on compounds removal. The sulfur compounds achieved >95% removal at all SED, and similar result was found for *p*-cresol. The 4-ethylphenol had a removal efficiency between 84-92%, while indoles had relatively lower removal (68-86%). The removal patterns varied among organic acids. The butyric acid had the highest removal efficiency with more than 92% at all SED. For propionic acid and *n*-valeric acid, low SED yielded only about 30% removal, and the removals dramatically increased to ca. 80-98% at SED of 112.9 and 143.8 J L⁻¹. A production of 27-265% of acetic acid was detected and increased SED could largely reduce the production. The O₃ concentrations at stable stage of four SED was 420, 630, 508 and 332 ppmv, respectively. The formation of greenhouse gas nitrous oxide (N₂O) were also evaluated and the concentrations of reactor outlet were 2.3, 6.2, 8.0 and 9.2 ppmv at four SED as compared to background concentration of ca. 0.33 ppmv. Furthermore, addition of 19.6 ppmv NH₃ increased the N₂O production by 88, 51, 52 and 63%, respectively.

To conclude, DBD reactor could efficiently remove most of the livestock odorants, while the formation of byproducts and its environmental effects need to be considered when using this technology.

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