Answers to reviewers

1. The title of the paper points to a new product of probiotics and iron. However, the effect of iron is not the subject of work. Consider changing the title or give a little more detailed explanation of the potential impact of iron on the tested parameters. Consider for example, „Low-moisture starch for improved viablity and stability of new probiotic *L.plantarum* 299v preparation“. According to the reviewers comment we have changed the title as suggested to the: „Low-moisture starch for improved viablity and stability of new probiotic *L.plantarum* 299v preparation“.
2. The abstract should focus on the significance, purpose and results of the research. The first part of abstract can be used for introduction section. According to the reviewers comment, we have used the first part of abstract inside the introduction section and the abstract is now focused on the significance, purpose and the results of the research.
3. Introduction section can be reformulated so that the main hypotheses are emphasized through a description of the importance of the additives in capsules (with active components) to the desired product characteristics. We have reformulated the introduction section so that the importance of API and excipients characteristics in the product, according to the reviewers comment.
4. Lines 61-62 – it is not clear (at least to reviewer) whether the minimum values or maximum values of moisture in the raw materials are defined. In other words, whether it is necessary for the raw material (e.g.starch) to have a moisture of at least 5% and more (so it can go to for example 10%) or it is desirable to be at most 5% and less (in the second case 2%). In addition, what is preffered range of ambient humidity? We have reformulated the paragraph regarding the moisture content in the active pharmaceutical ingredient and the excipient, so it is further explained that the minimal values of moisture are needed in the substances.
5. In section 2.1. more detailed characteristics of the materials could be indicated (for example, the degree of cleanliness of chemicals, the declared number of cells, moisture content in porbiotic powder and the like). As requested, moisture content in all raw materials is more detailed explained in the introduction section.
6. In section 2.6. there is repetition from section 2.1 (lines 131 – 135) and sentence from lines 138-140 can be used in results and discussion section. According to the reviewers suggestions, we have removed the part that has a repetition and the lines from 138-140 are moved to the results and discussion section.
7. Some terms should be adjusted to the custom terms in the art. For ex.sampling amount – aliquot (line 150); rehydrated – resuspended (line 148). We have adjusted the above mentioned terms according to the reviewers suggestions.
8. Complete paragraph (lines 145-156)- should be rephrased with corresponded terms. Also, pay attention on „…then diluted in serial solutions“ – it is serial dilution of suspension. Indicate the concetration of the ingredients in suspension. The authors indicate anaerobic condition. If later, what is the CO2 content? How the anaerobic conditions are obtained? We have rephrased the complete paragraph according to the reviewers suggestions. Anaerobic conditions, CO2 content are not requested in internal method and inside the relevant literature so they are not stated in this research paper.
9. Section 2.8 – What is the specific moisture range? Is it minimal or max. moisture content? According to the reviewers suggestions we have explained in details that the specific moisture range should be as low as possible.
10. Line 204 – The abbreviation API appears in the text for the fist time, it should indicate what it stands for (it also appears in the figure 2 and 3). We have explained the abbreviation API in the Introduction section, and we have put it in its longer form in the figures.
11. Data from Table 2 can be displayed as a chart with the displayed mean values and standard deviations. According to the reviewers suggestions we have displayed Table 2 as Figure 4 and Figure 5 with its mean values and standard deviations.
12. A little more discussion should be included in the part of the results that may indicate the implications of the results obtained or a comparison with some previous or other experiences. In addition, some parts from Introduction section can also be used for discussion (especially lines 65-72). We have used lines 65-72 from the introduction section for the discussion section according to the reviewers suggestions. Additionaly, we have used a little more discussion about the implications of the obtained results and in comparison to the other researches.
13. The text from the conclusion can be used for the discussion section. The conclusion itself should emphasize the significance of the obtained results and possibly the future direction of the research. We have removed the data form the conclusion to the discussion section, as requested by the reviewers, so it now emphasizes the significance of the obtained results and the future direction of the research.