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Pan-genome analysis reveals the molecular basis of niche adaptation of *Staphylococcus epidermidis* strains

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Running title: Pan-genome analysis of Staphylococci

Keywords: *Staphylococcus epidermidis*, antimicrobial resistance, pan-genome, mobile
genetic element

26 **Abstract**

27 *Staphylococcus epidermidis* is the most commonly isolated species from human skin and the
28 second leading cause of bloodstream infections. Here, we performed a large-scale
29 comparative study without any pre-assigned reference to identify genomic determinants
30 associated with their diversity and adaptation as a “double-side spy”, a skin dominant
31 colonization, and a successful pathogen. The pan-genome of *S. epidermidis* is open with 435
32 core proteins and a pan-genome size of 8034 proteins. Genome-wide phylogenetic tree shows
33 that whole genome sequence is a powerful tool to analyze the complex evolutionary process
34 of *S. epidermidis* and investigate the source of infection. Comparative genome analyses
35 demonstrate the high diversity of antimicrobial resistances, especially mobile genetic
36 elements. The complicated relationships of host-bacterium and bacterium-bacterium help *S.*
37 *epidermidis* to play a vital role in balancing the epithelial microflora. The highly variable and
38 dynamic nature of the *S. epidermidis* genome may be the result of its success in adapting to
39 broad habitats, which is necessary to deal with complex environments. This study gives the
40 general landscape of *S. epidermidis* pan-genome and provides valuable insights into
41 mechanisms for genome evolution and lifestyle adaptation of this ecologically flexible
42 species.

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44

45 **Introduction**

46 The coagulase-negative *Staphylococcus epidermidis* (*S. epidermidis*) is a common human
47 skin commensal bacterium that can be cultured from virtually every body surface of healthy
48 individuals. It also plays a central role in the skin microbiome [1, 2], it can keep the
49 ecological balance of human skin microflora [3]. *S. epidermidis* can produce various
50 bacteriocins, which kill other microorganisms and have frequently been proposed to enhance
51 survival of the producer strains in a competitive fashion [4, 5]. Especially, serine protease
52 Esp, secreted by *S. epidermidis*, can inhibit the biofilm formation of *S. aureus* and destroy
53 pre-existing *S. aureus* biofilms [6].

54 However, *S. epidermidis* is the second most common cause of nosocomial infections, which
55 in most cases are antibiotic-resistant [1, 7]. Antibiotic resistance remarkably complicates the
56 treatment and increases the medical expenses [8]. The large gene pool of antibiotic resistance
57 in *S. epidermidis* is shared with many other pathogenic species such as *S. aureus* [9]. Mobile
58 genetic element, multidrug-resistant conjugative plasmids, arginine catabolic mobile element
59 (ACME) [9], and staphylococcal chromosome cassette *mec* (SCC*mec*) elements [10]
60 conferring β -lactam resistance are transferred frequently, enabling rapid evolution and
61 adaptation against antibiotic selection pressure [11, 12]. When the protective layer of the
62 human epithelium is breached and the mechanisms of host immunity fail, staphylococcal
63 infections can become extremely dangerous and even fatal [13]. *S. epidermidis* is particularly
64 associated with the increased use of indwelling medical devices such as artificial heart valves,
65 prosthetic joints, and vascular catheters, which provide a substrate for biofilm formation. On
66 the other hand, during the long-time “arms race”, human beings have developed versatile
67 immunity system with antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) as the first line of innate immune
68 defense on the human skin; meanwhile, *S. epidermidis* also owns multiple mechanisms such
69 as surface charge alteration, extracellular proteases, exopolymers, and efflux pump proteins

70 to fight against AMPs [7]. The complex host-bacterium and bacterium-bacterium
71 relationships make it necessary to investigate the genetic diversity, genome evolution, and
72 lifestyle adaptation of *S. epidermidis*.

73 Much attention has been focused on understanding the evolution and spread of *S. epidermidis*
74 by different methods [11, 14]. As the time goes on, high throughput sequencing is now fast
75 and cheap and a large amount of genomics data about *S. epidermidis* are accumulated, it is
76 essential to perform more comprehensive comparative and evolutionary study of ecologically
77 diverse strains of *S. epidermidis* for better clinical management. Here, we compared the
78 genomic features of *S. epidermidis* isolates of clinical and non-clinical relevance by using a
79 pan-genome analysis of 198 publicly available *S. epidermidis* strains at the GenBank
80 database of National Center for Biotechnology Information at April 30 of 2017. We
81 assembled the consensus “pan-chromosome” without any pre-assigned genome reference and
82 identified both core and variable regions within the chromosome. Second, we utilized a
83 comparative genomics approach on 198 genomes to analyze the diversity of antibiotic
84 resistance of *S. epidermidis*. Our results revealed that *S. epidermidis* isolates encoded a vast
85 collection of genetic determinants and mechanisms to confer antibiotic resistance,
86 antimicrobial peptides resistance, and survival adaptations. These analyses will provide
87 insight into the coevolution of *S. epidermidis* as a nosocomial pathogen and directly aid the
88 future efforts for large-scale epidemiological studies of this continuously evolving multi-drug
89 resistant organism.

90

91 **Methods**

92 **Strains**

93 A total of 198 *S. epidermidis* isolates were selected to represent known diversity within the
94 species and multiple locations and sources until April 30 of 2017, including reference
95 genomes from *S. epidermidis* strain RP62A (Gill et al. 2005). All the available genome
96 sequence of *S. epidermidis* strains and related annotation data were downloaded through the
97 GenBank database [15] of NCBI (see Table S1 in the supplemental material).

98 **SCCmec and ACME typing**

99 An SCCmec sequence cassette database was prepared with the following accession numbers
100 downloaded from NCBI: AB033763.2 (Type I), AB433542.1 (Type I.2), D86934.2 (Type II),
101 AB261975.1 (Type II.4), AJ810123 (Type II-B), AB127982.1 (Type II-B), AM983545.1
102 (Type II-D), HE858191.1 (Type II-E), AB037671.1 (Type III), HM030721.1 (Type IV),
103 HM030720.1 (Type IV), AM292304.1 (ZH47 mobile elements), AB425824.1 (Type IV),
104 EU437549.2 (Type IV-A), AB063172.2 (Type IV-A), AB063173 (Type IV-B), AY271717.1
105 (Type IV-C), AB096217 (Type IV-C), AB245470.1 (Type IV-C), AB097677.1 (Type IV-D),
106 AJ810121.1 (Type IV-E), DQ106887.1 (Type IV-G), AB633329.1 (Type IV-I), AB425823.1
107 Type IV), AB121219.1 (Type V), AB478780.1 (Type V), AB512767.1 (Type V),
108 AF411935.3 (Type VI), AB462393.1 (Type VII), AB373032.1 (Type V-C1), FJ670542.1
109 (Type VIII), FJ390057.1 (Type VIII), AB505628.1 (Type IX), AB505630.1 (Type X), and
110 FR821779.1 (Type XI) [16].

111 The ACME-*arcA* and ACME-*opp3AB* genes were used as markers of the ACME-*arc* cluster
112 and the ACME-*opp3* cluster, respectively. ACME was classified as type I (contains the
113 ACME-*arcA* and ACME-*opp3AB* gene clusters), type II (carries only the ACME-*arcA*
114 locus), and type III (carries only the ACME-*opp3AB* locus) [17]. ACME-*arcA* and ACME-

115 *opp3AB* identified in this study were compared with the reference sequences of ACME-*arcA*
116 (USA300_FPR3757) and ACME-*opp3AB* (USA300_FPR3757).

117 **kSNP *S. epidermidis* trees.**

118 A phylogenetic tree was inferred from single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) identified by
119 kSNP (version: 3.0, <https://sourceforge.net/projects/ksnp/>) [18] by using a *k*-mer length 19
120 nucleotides and based on a requirement that at least 80% of the genomes have a nucleotide at
121 a given SNP position in order for the SNP to be considered to be a core and included in tree
122 building. A total of 1832 core SNP positions were identified. These SNPs were used to infer
123 a maximum-likelihood tree with RAxML [19] with 100 bootstrap replicates.

124 **Pan-genome analysis**

125 Cluster of orthologous proteins were generated with version 3.24 of PanOCT
126 (<https://sourceforge.net/projects/panoct/>) as previous described [20]. Briefly, PanOCT deals
127 with recently diverging paralogs by using neighborhood gene information. All the parameters
128 were set to default values except for the length ratio to discard shorter protein fragments
129 when a protein is split due to a frameshift or other mechanisms was set to 1.33 as
130 recommended by the authors. Orthologous clusters were stringently defined as all sequences
131 in a cluster having shared sequence identity $\geq 70\%$ and coverage $\geq 75\%$. Plots and
132 calculations of pan-genome sizes, new genes discovered and pan-genome status were also
133 determined as described previously [21].

134 **Characterization of strains.**

135 *In silico* multilocus sequence typing of 198 strains was performed with the MLST 1.8 online
136 server [22]. The antimicrobial resistance genes in the sequenced isolates were identified by
137 BLASTp [23] searching with the databases of ARDB [24]. Genes conferring virulence
138 factors were identified using BLASTp with VFDB [25]. Given that many virulence factors

139 for *S. epidermidis* that are not contained in the VFDB, we used the orthologous proteins and
140 virulence factors from RP62a [26] and ATCC1228 [27] to make up the missing information.

141 **Functional analysis**

142 All genes are BLASTed against all sequences in the database of KOBAS 2.0
143 (<http://kobas.cbi.pku.edu.cn/>) [28]. The cutoffs are BLASTp *E*-value $< 10^{-5}$ and BLAST
144 subject coverage $> 70\%$. We used the genes from same genome as the default background
145 distribution and considered only pathways for which there were at least two genes mapped.
146 Fisher's exact test was choosing to perform statistical test and Bonferroni correction was used
147 to reduce the high overall Type-I error with `p.adjust` from R package.

148 **Statistical analyses**

149 The differences in the prevalence of antimicrobial resistance genes and phenotypes among
150 isolates were analyzed by using two-tailed Fisher's exact test and Bonferroni correction was
151 also performed as mentioned above. All the statistical analyses were carried out using R
152 package (version: 3.3). A *P* value of < 0.05 was regarded as statistically significant.

153

154 **Results**

155 **Core pan-genome of *S. epidermidis***

156 Despite the intensive effort to characterize *S. epidermidis* and the sizable number of whole
157 genome comparisons in literature [29], more and more genome data is rapid accumulated and
158 could easily obtained from public database, such as NCBI. Using PanOCT, a total of 8,034
159 orthologous protein clusters were identified from a collection of all *S. epidermidis* genomes
160 publicly available at the time of the analysis (Supplementary Table S1). PanOCT only
161 includes non-paralogs in clusters and uses conserved gene neighborhood to separate
162 duplicated genes. This means that insertion sequence elements that are in novel contexts will
163 often form singleton clusters even though they are identical in sequence to other IS elements
164 within or between genomes analyzed. When the “core” pan-genome is defined to be present
165 at all 198 genomes analyzed, there were 435 (5.4 %) core protein clusters and 2915 (36.3 %) novel clusters (groups with a single member from a single genome) (Fig. 1a). To predict the
166 theoretical maximum pan-genome size (i.e., the total number of genes, including core, unique,
167 and dispensable genes) a pan-genome model was implemented using medians and an
168 exponential decay function (Fig. 1b). The maximum pan-genome size was estimated to be
169 $12,554 \pm 65$ genes. To determine whether the *S. epidermidis* pan-genome is open or closed,
170 the number of new genes identified (i.e., unique or strain-specific genes) for each genome
171 added was determined and fit to a power law function ($n = \kappa N^{-\alpha}$) as described previously
172 [21]. According to the result, we found the pan-genome of *S. epidermidis* appeared to be
173 open ($\alpha = 0.226 \pm 0.002$; Fig. 1b). For each genome added, the number of new genes was
174 extrapolated by calculating $tg(\theta)$, which was determined to be 7.7 ± 0.4 (Fig. 1b).
175
176 The function of the genes within the variable genome was investigated by assigning all gene
177 clusters to clusters of orthologous groups (COGs) categories [30] and the results showed that
178 novel genes were most likely to be assigned to categories (Supplementary Table S2 and S3)

179 such as mobilome, ribosomal structure and biogenesis, carbohydrate transport and
180 metabolism, and nucleotide transport and metabolism, based on the result of Fisher's exact
181 test.

182 **Phylogenetic relationship of *S. epidermidis* isolates**

183 To estimate the genetic relationships among *S. epidermidis* strains, we compared all 198
184 genomes by using a single nucleotide polymorphism-based phylogeny. SNPs were identified
185 from the combined set of genome sequences by using kSNP. Nucleotide positions present in
186 at least 80 % of all genomes were used to build a Maximum-Likelihood phylogenetic tree
187 with RAxML following the tutorial. Strikingly, the 198 *S. epidermidis* isolates formed two
188 distinct groups (Fig. 3), called Cluster A (solid line) and B (dotted line). Most of Sequence
189 Type (ST) 2 nosocomial isolates were near identical at the nucleotide level for all core genes
190 (Supplementary Table S4). All of ST 2 strains in this study presented in Cluster A and had an
191 extremely short evolutionary distance from each other, indicating that these strains were
192 probably derived from a recent common ancestor. By contrast, Cluster B represents a lineage
193 with reduced virulence and all of ST 5 commensal strains presented in Cluster B and
194 clustered together. The rest of Cluster B had a much longer evolutionary distance from ST 5
195 strains. This clade may have more complex history of evolution and produce a various sub-
196 group.

197 **Antimicrobial resistance across *S. epidermidis***

198 Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is very common among *S. epidermidis* isolates and often
199 limits treatment options [31]. Given the clinical importance of AMR in *S. epidermidis*, we
200 performed a genome-wide analysis of all known AMR genes within our genomic dataset.
201 According to the analysis of ARDB database, we found 28 different types of genes involved
202 in 31 antibiotics (Fig. 3). Nearly all isolates carry at least one type antibiotic resistance gene.
203 Among the genes involved in antimicrobial resistance, our data showed that there were two

204 genes, *norA* and *bacA*, conserved in all strains. Based on the enrichment analysis of strains
205 from different sources, we found that strains from sources (skin, blood, environment and
206 plant) had significantly different antibiotic resistance profiles: isolates from blood (9
207 antibiotic resistance genes) and skin (8 antibiotic resistance genes) had significantly enriched
208 antibiotics (Supplementary Table S5), while isolates from environment had no significantly
209 enriched antibiotics. First-line antibiotic therapy for catheter-related bloodstream infections
210 was vancomycin. None of the isolates were resistant to the antibiotic at the genetic level,
211 regardless of isolation source.

212 **SCC*mec* and ACME in *S. epidermidis***

213 SCC*mec*, or *staphylococcal* cassette chromosome *mec*, is a mobile genetic element that
214 carries the central determinant for broad-spectrum beta-lactam resistance encoded by the
215 *mecA* gene a mobile genetic element of *Staphylococcus* bacterial species [10, 32]. According
216 to the completeness of genome in this study (only 7 complete genome sequences), we only
217 analyzed the genes from well-defined SCC*mec* genomic islands [33]. There were 58.6 %
218 (116/198) of *S. epidermidis* strains, in which complete *mec* gene complexes, *mecA*, and
219 *mecR1* genes were detected (Supplementary Table S1). However, only 39.4 % (78/198) of
220 strains had *ccr* gene complex from type IV cassette, in which both *ccrA* and *ccrB* were
221 present. Similar to the previous results [29, 34], nearly all of the ST2 nosocomial isolates
222 (94.6 %, 70/74) had at least one copy of *mecA* from type IX cassette and *mecR1* from Type
223 VIII or IV-G cassette. On the other hand, a high prevalence (98 %, 195/198) of ACME was
224 found in *S. epidermidis* strains in this study, of which 22.7 % (45/198) was type I and 75.8%
225 (150/198) was type II.

226 **Biofilm formation of *S. epidermidis***

227 Biofilm formation is the major of virulence factor of *S. epidermidis* strains, which will
228 contribute to the persistence of clinical infection. Here, we analyze some well-known genes

229 involved in biofilm formation such as adhesive molecules, including polysaccharide
 230 intercellular adhesin (*icaABCD*), proteinaceous factors (*bhp* and *aap*), teichoic acids,
 231 extracellular DNA and so on (Supporting information Table S6). The polysaccharide
 232 intercellular adhesion (*icaABCD*) genes that encode biofilm-associated genes for poly-N-
 233 acetylglucosamine synthesis were found in 60% of the commensal isolates, in agreement with
 234 previous studies [34]. Especially, any of the *ica* genes was not found in some ST 2 strains
 235 (Fig. 4). Gene *aap* was enriched in the blood (adjusted *P*-value < 0.01) compared to the
 236 remaining isolates and therefore might be a potential biomarker for *S. epidermidis* infection.
 237 We analyze the enrichment of all genes involved in virulence factors and found the *icaABCD*
 238 was significantly enriched despite the sources or sequence types.

239 **Human-Bacterium and Bacterium-bacterium interactions in *S. epidermidis***

240 *S. epidermidis* is the major colonization microorganisms in the human skin with complex
 241 human-bacterium and bacterium-bacterium interactions. We analyzed the genes (Table 1 and
 242 supplementary Table S5) involved in resistance against antimicrobial peptides that can inhibit
 243 the growth of most skin microorganism including *S. epidermidis*. Some genes (e.g.
 244 *capABCD*), which are significantly enriched in the blood and skin, were reported to assist the
 245 strain to survive on the skin surface [7]. We also analyzed genes involved in bacterium-
 246 bacterium interactions. We found that the genes involved in short-chain fatty acids
 247 biosynthesis and extracellular proteases (e.g. Esp) had no difference despite the isolates.

248 Table 1 *S. epidermidis* resistance mechanisms that target AMPs.

Resistance mechanism	Gene	Target AMPs	Functions	Enrichment
AMP sensing	<i>apsSRX</i>	Most cationic AMPs	3-component sensor/regulator	-
	<i>braSR/braDE/vraDE</i>	Bacitracin, nisin		-
Phosphatidylglycerol lysylation	<i>mprF</i>	Most cationic AMPs	Lysylation of membrane phospholipids	-
Teichoic acids alanylation	<i>dltABCD</i>	Most cationic AMPs	Alanylation of teichoic acids	Blood / Skin (<i>dltD</i>)
Exopolymers	<i>icaADBC</i>	HBD3, LL-37, DCD-1	Production of PNAG	Blood(<i>icaB</i>)

			exopolysaccharide; IcaB	
			<i>N</i> -acetylglucosamine	
			deacetylase introduces	
			positive charge	
	<i>cap</i> ABCD	HBD3, LL-37, DCD-1		
Extracellular proteases	<i>sepA</i>	LL-37	Degrades AMPs	-
	<i>esp</i>	LL-37a		-
ABC transporters	<i>vra</i> FG	Vancomycin, polymyxin B, colistin	Putative AMP exporter	-

249

250

251 Discussion

252 *S. epidermidis* is a coagulase-negative and Gram-positive staphylococcus that is part of the
253 normal mucosa and skin microflora in humans and other mammals [2]. It is the second
254 leading cause of nosocomial infections [35]. Although it is a saprophyte, opportunistic
255 pathogen with plenty of antibiotic resistance and virulence factors [36], this natural skin
256 colonizer plays a critical role in balancing the epithelial microflora [1, 37]. As an innocuous
257 commensal microorganism, for a long time *S. epidermidis* has been seen as an avirulent
258 species. With the accumulation of genomic sequences, we can now further explore the
259 genetic mechanisms of environmental adaptability of *S. epidermidis*, the evolution process
260 during the outbreak, and the molecular biomarkers for clinic diagnosis [1, 38].

261 In our current pan-genome analysis, *S. epidermidis* had a relatively compact genome with a
262 size of about 2.5 Mb, and yet almost 20% of this genome was in flux, exchanging with a
263 large pool of various genes. These findings were similar to what had been reported by Conlan
264 and colleagues [29]. The significant number of genes involved in mobilome make horizontal
265 gene transfer easier between the *Staphylococcus* strains and lead to the increase of the “open”
266 pan-genome [39]. Besides, mobile genetic elements, such as SCC*mec*, ACME and plasmids,
267 make the genome structure more unpredictable [40]. High-resolution phylogenetic tree
268 constructed from genome-wide SNPs reveal important details not seen by traditional multi-
269 locus sequence typing (MLST) or single gene marker (16S rDNA). From the phylogenetic
270 tree, we found the ST2 isolates had an extremely short evolutionary distance from each other.
271 The genetic markers *mecA* and *icaA*, which are used to predict the antimicrobial resistance
272 and biofilm phenotypes, have been shown to be more common in hospital isolates than in
273 non-hospital isolates; however, these markers have much less power to distinguish infection
274 isolates from commensally available isolates that contaminate clinical specimens [41].
275 According to the enrichment analysis, we found it was impossible to distinguish the strains of

276 blood from that of skin, both of which had a similar lifestyle and genetic background.
277 However, it is possible to identify the strains from other habitats with biomarkers such as
278 *ica*ABCD and *cap*ABCD. Whole genome sequencing has been proved to be a more powerful
279 routine diagnostic tool than the traditional MLST or RT-PCR because it can rapidly identify
280 the infection source and antibiotic resistance in an affordable manner [42, 43]. As more
281 genetic data of *S. epidermidis* have been available and new machine learning algorithm is
282 developed [41], WGS may help to predict the infection isolation sources and antibiotic
283 resistance in a quicker and more accurate manner.

284 *S. epidermidis* has very complicated relationship with human and other bacteria.
285 Antimicrobial peptides (AMPs) play an important role in providing immunity to bacterial
286 colonization on human epithelia. Recent research has shown that staphylococci have multiple
287 systems to combat AMP activity, including AMP sensor that can regulate the expressions of
288 genes involved in AMP resistance depending on the presence of AMPs [7]. We analyzed the
289 distribution of gene involved in AMP resistance and found significant enrichment in blood
290 and skin and variable in different strains, which may be the consequence of coevolution of
291 human's immune system. On the other side, *S. epidermidis* strains also can inhibit the growth
292 of other bacterium to be dominant species on the skin surface. Serine protease Esp, which is
293 secreted by *S. epidermidis*, has been found to be able to inhibit the biofilm formation of *S.*
294 *aureus* and destroy pre-existing *S. aureus* biofilms [6]. Other mechanisms are also involved
295 in fighting against pathogens and maintaining homeostasis [44, 45]. On the other hand, *S.*
296 *epidermidis* was found to be a reservoir of antibiotic resistance, with its virulence
297 determinants shared with other more pathogenic species such as *S. aureus*, as demonstrated in
298 previous studies [29]. In particular, SCC*mec*, ACME elements conferring β -lactam resistance,
299 and other genes are transferred frequently between *Staphylococcus* strains, enabling rapid
300 evolution and adaptation against antibiotic selection pressure and provide additional

301 competitive advantage. For instance, type III of SCC*mec* carries a phenol soluble modulin
302 *psm-mec*, which may affect the virulence of *S. aureus* [40].

303 In conclusion, our current study provides information on the molecular characteristics of *S.*
304 *epidermidis* strains isolated from different environments from all over the world. From a
305 genomics perspective, the pan-genome analysis of the *S. epidermidis* reveals a high level of
306 diversity among the generic and species-specific genes and the potential supply routes for
307 enhanced versatility via inter- and intra-species horizontal gene transfer. Frequent horizontal
308 gene transfer enables the *Staphylococcus* to adapt to complex environments (e.g., high-level
309 antibiotic), and it may continue to be the dominant genus over the next few years. The
310 understanding of the mechanisms of gene transfer helps us to better prevent the emergence of
311 epidemic pan-drug resistant *S. epidermidis* strains.

312

313 **List of abbreviations**

314 *SCCmec*: Staphylococcal chromosome cassette *mec*

315 AMPs: Antimicrobial peptides

316 SNPs: Single-nucleotide polymorphisms

317 COGs: Clusters of orthologous groups

318 ST: Sequence type

319 AMR: Antimicrobial resistance

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322 **Acknowledgments**

323 This work was supported by the National Key Research and Development Program of China
324 (Grant 2018YFC2000500), CAMS Innovation Fund for Medical Sciences (2018-I2M-1-002),
325 the Applied Research Program of Capital Clinical Features (Grant Z18110001718172), the
326 Key Research Program for Health Care in China (Grant W2016ZD01).

327 The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

328

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469
470

471 Figure Legends

472 **Figure 1** Analysis of the *Staphylococcus epidermidis* pan-genome. (a). The distribution of
473 protein cluster sizes generated from the comparison of 198 *S. epidermidis* genomes using
474 PanOCT. (b). The pan-genome size (left) and the number of novel genes discovered with the
475 addition of each new genome (right) were estimated for all 198 genomes using a pan-genome
476 model based on the original Tettelin et al. model [21].

477 **Figure 2** Functional analysis of the pan-genome of *Staphylococcus epidermidis*. (a).
478 Distribution of core / dispensable / novel genes in the type strain RP62a. Starting from the
479 outermost ring the feature rings depict: (1) COG functional categories for forward strand
480 coding sequences; (2) Core (brown) / Dispensable (blue) genes for forward strand coding
481 sequences; (3) Forward strand sequence features; (4) Reverse strand sequence features; (5)
482 Core (brown) / Dispensable (blue) genes for reverse strand coding sequences; (6) COG
483 functional categories for reverse strand coding sequences. (7) GC content; (8) GC skew. The
484 colors of different COG functional categories were following the definition of Grant et al.
485 [46].

486 (b). Numbers of core, dispensable and novel genes for each COG category. COGs
487 significantly enriched (adjusted P -value < 0.05, Fisher exact test) in core, dispensable, or
488 novel genes are marked with red asterisk.

489 **Figure 3** Phylogenetic SNP tree of *Staphylococcus epidermidis* strains. A whole-genome
490 core SNP maximum likelihood tree was constructed for 198 genomes with kSNP and
491 RAxML. Heatmap on the right indicates copies of 28 genes involved in antibiotic resistance.
492 Legends on the bottom stand for copy number of resistant genes.

493 **Figure 4** Heatmap of virulence factors among the *Staphylococcus epidermidis* strains. The
494 dendrogram was generated using complete linkage clustering of copies of genes involved in
495 virulence factors. The red color stands for genes that exist in the genomes and the blue color

496 for missing ones. Legends on the right stand for colors of different host, isolates and
497 geographic information.

498 **Figure 5** *In silico* analysis of virulence factors of the *Staphylococcus epidermidis* strains. The
499 types of virulence factors were following the VFDBs database. Legends on the right stand for
500 colors of different host, isolates, and geographic information. Different colors stand for copy
501 number of each virulence factors.

502

503 Additional files

504 Table S1 Basic information of all strains analyzed used in this study

505 Table S2 Result of COG enrichment analysis across all strains

506 Table S3 Result of KEGG enrichment analysis across all strains

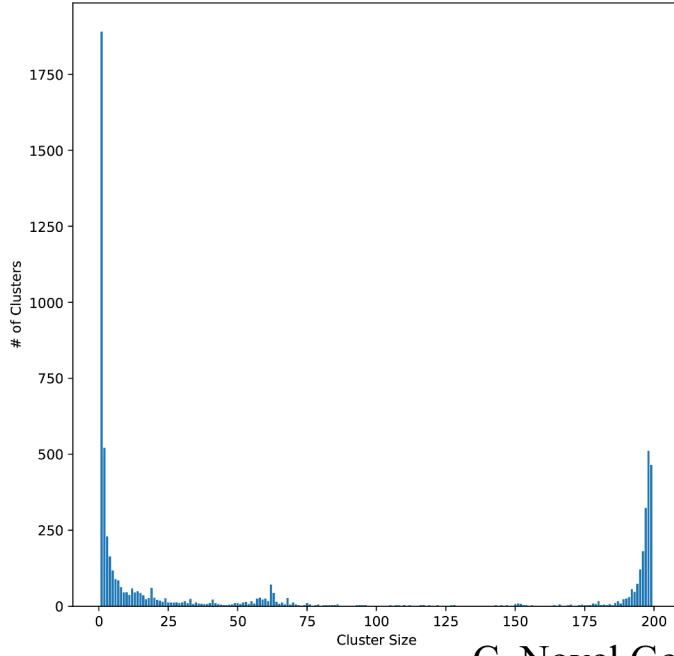
507 Table S4 Cluster of orthologous proteins produced by PanOCT

508 Table S5 Enrichment analysis about antibiotic resistances from different sources

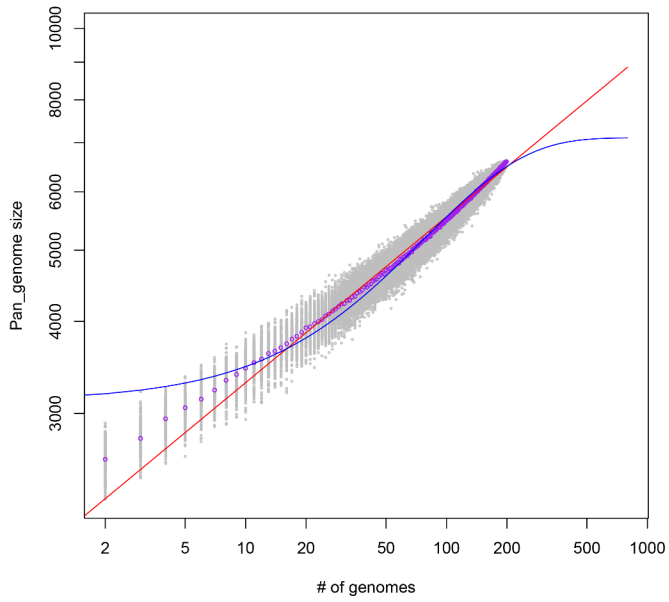
509 Table S6 Enrichment analysis about genes related in biofilm formation

510

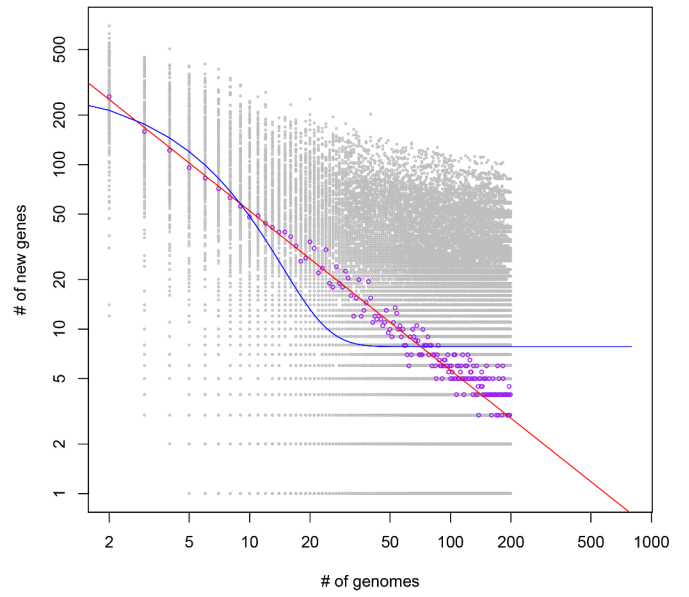
A. PanOCT Cluster Size Distribution



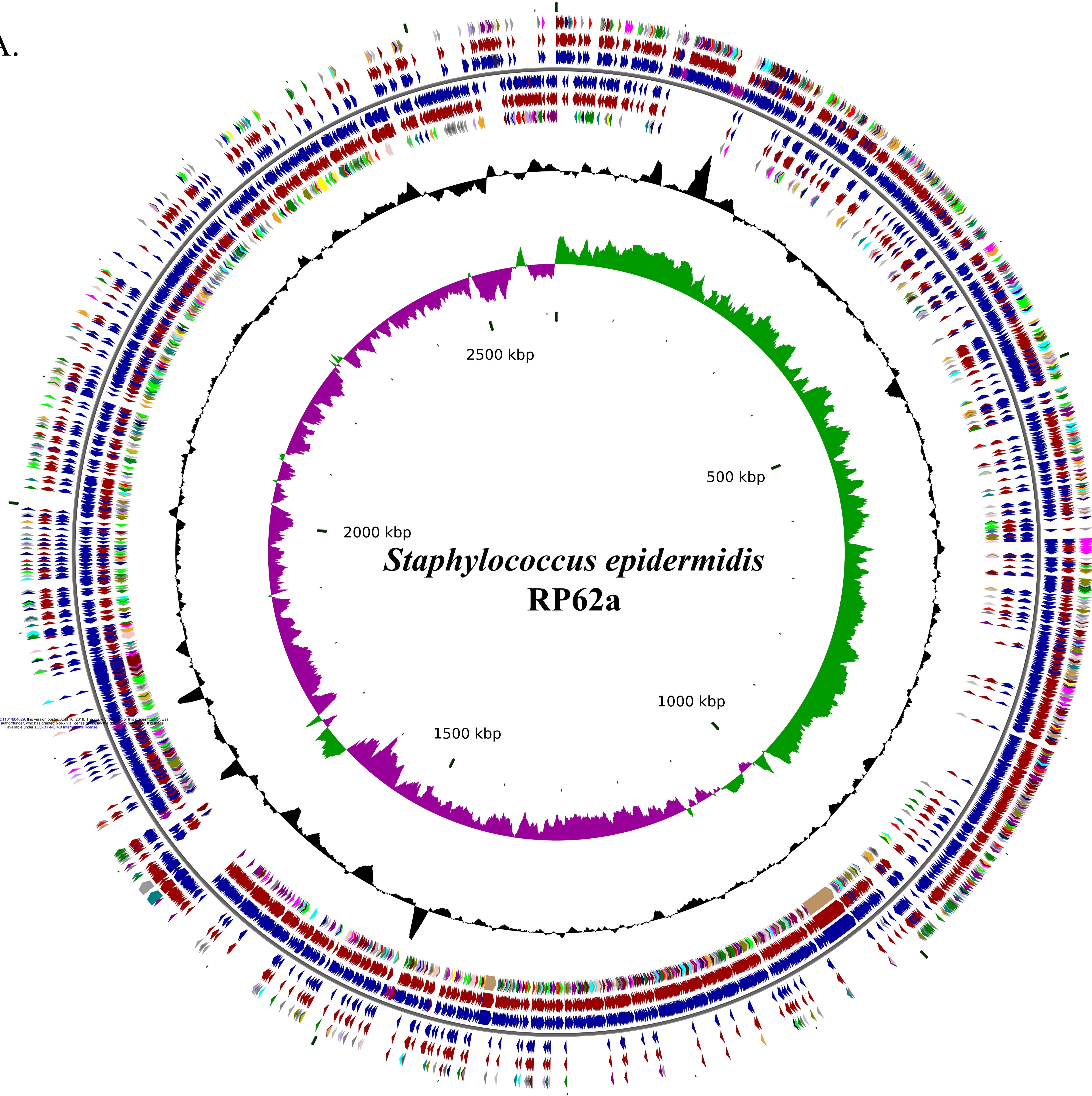
B. Pan-Genome



C. Novel Genes

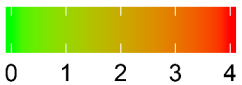
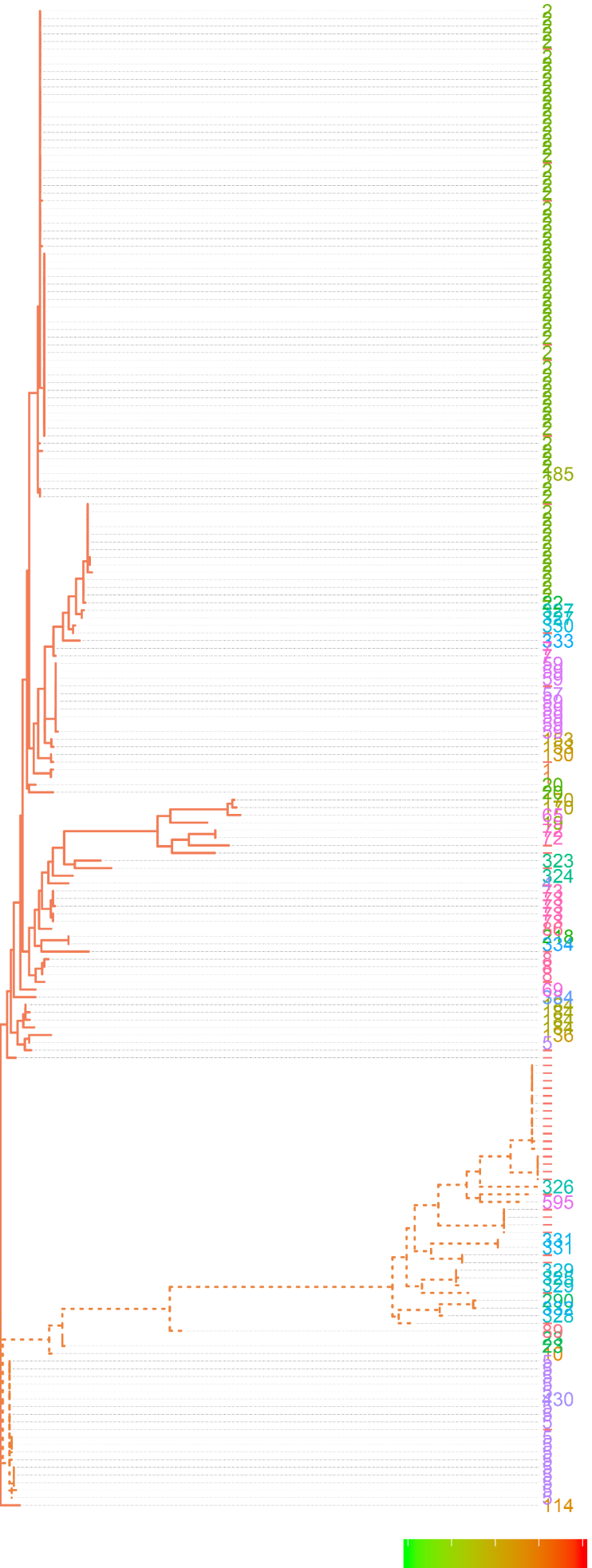
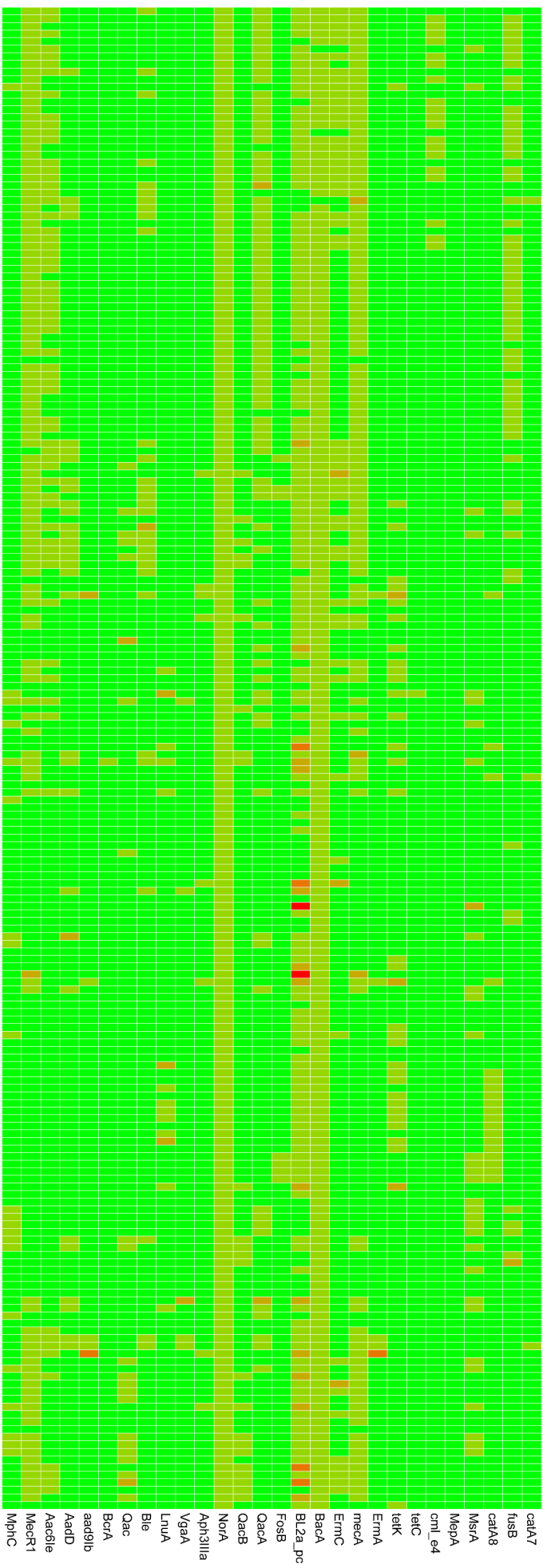


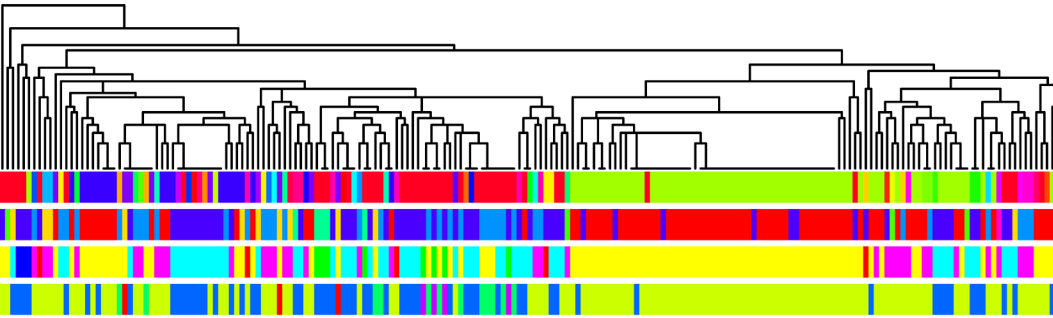
A.



B.







ST
Source
Location
Host

Source
 Blood
 Environ
 Lung
 Plants
 Skin
 Unknown
 Urine

Location
 Denmark
 Germany
 India
 Other
 Russia
 USA

Host
 Cow
 Human
 Mouse
 Other
 Rice



- Capsule(capC)
- Thermonuclease(nuc)
- Polysaccharide_intercellular_adhesin(icaA)
- Staphyloferrins
- Antimicrobial_peptide_sensor(apsX)
- Lipase(geh1)
- Polysaccharide_intercellular_adhesin(icaC)
- Polysaccharide_intercellular_adhesin(icaB)
- Polysaccharide_intercellular_adhesin(icaD)
- surface_protein_H(sesH)
- surface_protein_G(sesG)
- Serine-aspartate_repeat-containing_protein_H(sdrH)
- Serine-aspartate_repeat-containing_protein_G(sdrG)
- Phenol-soluble_modulins(hld)
- d-alanylation_of_teichoic_acids(dltA)
- Antimicrobial_peptide_sensor(apsR)
- Serine-aspartate_repeat-containing_protein_F(sdrF)
- eDNA(atlE)
- surface_protein_E(sesE)
- beta-hemolysin(hlb)
- Teichoic_acids(tagA)
- Esterase_1
- Antimicrobial_peptide_sensor(apsS)
- Biofilm-associated_protein_homolog(bhp)
- d-alanylation_of_teichoic_acids(dltC)
- d-alanylation_of_teichoic_acids(dltD)
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_1
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_2
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_3
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_4
- Capsule(capB)
- Accumulation-associated_protein(aap)
- surface_protein_I(sesI)
- eDNA(cidA)
- Lipase(lipA)
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_5
- surface_protein_A(sesA)
- Teichoic_acids(tagD)
- Clp_Protease(clpX)
- protease(Serine)
- Clp_Protease(clpB)
- Teichoic_acids(tagX)
- Teichoic_acids(tagH)
- vraFG(vraG)
- Lipase(geh2)
- Clp_Protease(clpC)
- Autolysin/adhesin(aae)
- vraFG(vraF)
- Capsule(capD)
- Teichoic_acids(tagB)
- Serine_V8_protease(sspA)
- Multiple_peptide_resistance_factor(mprF)
- Lipase(lip)
- Capsule(capA)
- Lipase(geh)
- Hemolysin
- Extracellular_matrix_binding_protein(ebh)
- d-alanylation_of_teichoic_acids(dltB)
- Phenol-soluble_modulins_6
- Esterase_2
- Hemolysin_III
- Zinc_metalloprotease
- surface_protein_C(sesC)
- Cysteine_protease(sspB)
- Cysteine_protease(sspC)
- Clp_Protease(clpP)
- Teichoic_acids(tagG)
- Nuclease
- Iron_transporter(sitA)
- Elastase(sepA)
- Iron_transporter(sitC)
- Iron_transporter(sitB)

