Abstract
Several bacteria from the islands of Puerto Rico, Vieques and Trinidad were isolated for their carbohydrate degrading activities. These terrestrial and marine bacterium were collected from pineapple agricultural lands, tropical rain forests, coastlands and mangrove swamps. Organisms were screened for activity using chromogenic substrates (AZCL® Megazyme International Ltd., Ireland). The media composition for the effective culturing of some of the marine organisms has also been standardized. Gram-negative organisms were identified by sequence analysis of the PCR-amplified partial small subunit rRNA gene. Results indicate that the majority of the marine organisms tested belong to the genera Vibrio and Pseudoalteromonas and in the terrestrial environments Chryseobacterium predominated. These experiments reveal that sub-tropical environments are potentially good sources of microorganisms with novel carbohydrase activities.

Keywords
Caribbean, sub-tropical, carbohydrates, PCR, 16S rRNA gene, AZCL® substrates.