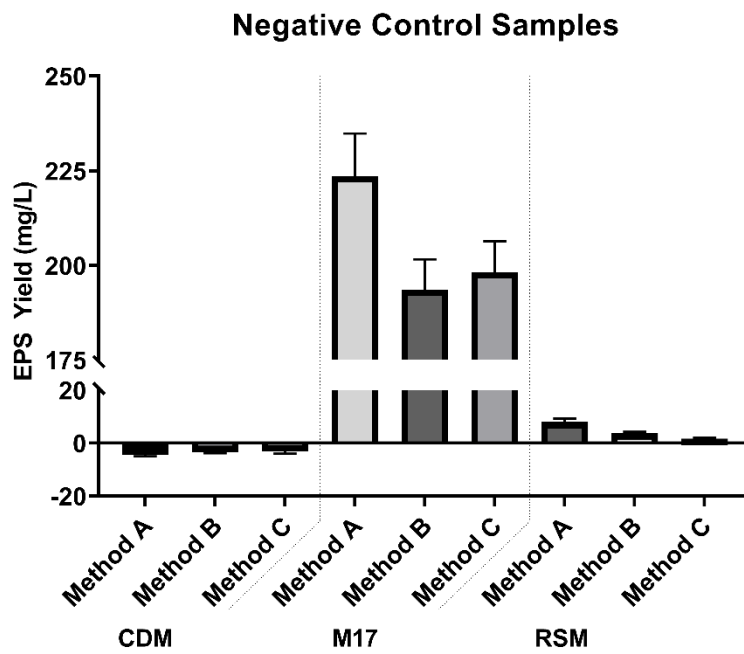
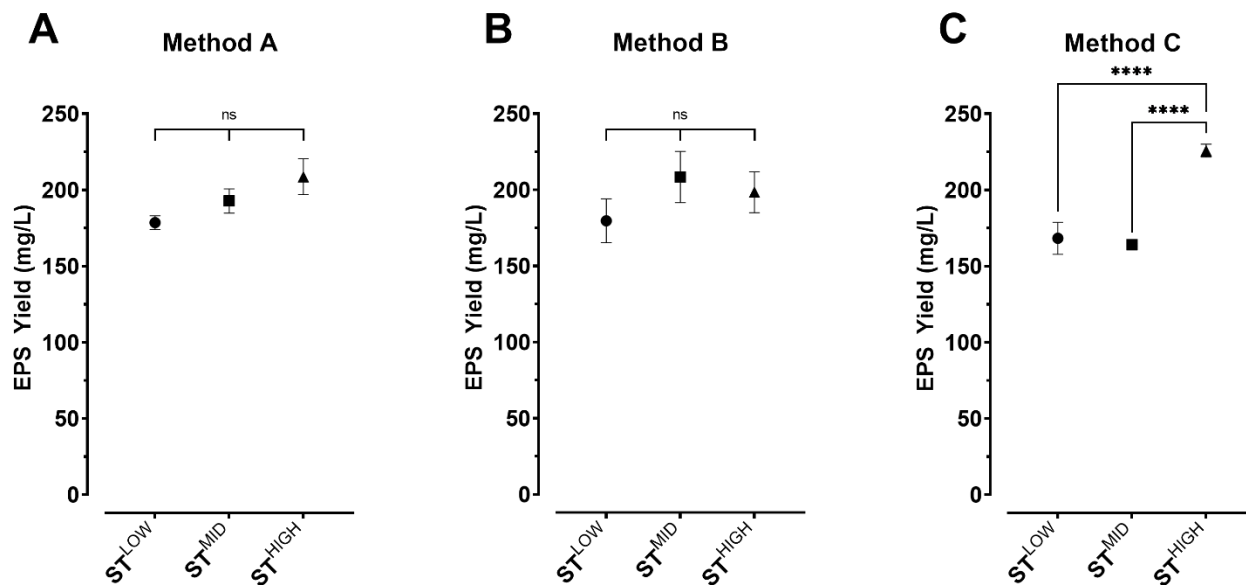


Supplemental Figure 1. Schematic representation of the three isolation procedures used.



Supplemental Figure 2. Background concentration of EPS measured in CDM, M17 and RSM media without the addition of xanthan gum or bacteria.



Supplemental Figure 3. Concentration of EPS isolated from *S. thermophilus* ST^{LOW}, ST^{MID} or ST^{HIGH} grown in M17 medium using three isolation procedures. Samples were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA with Tukey's multiple comparison test; ns – not significant, **** $p < 0.0001$.