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June 10, 1953

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
The University of Wisconsin
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Doctor Lederberg:

Thank you for providing a clue to strain 550-460 of E. coli. It proved to be one of Dr. Roepke's mutants, a uracil-requiring strain, not mentioned as yet in literature.

We have not done as much with the silica gel method of preserving cultures as I had hoped, but have by no means lost interest in it. Our one staff member whose duties allowed him any time for research refused to even try this method in comparison with other preservation techniques. Others of us have set up a few tests on three species of bacteria and six molds. All have survived for three months or more but we have no quantitative data on survival.

We have submitted an application to the National Science Foundation for a grant that would enable us to take up this study comprehensively. I am especially interested in the possibility of using this method to preserve bacteriophages. In a paper soon to appear in Applied Microbiology, C. C. Prouty of Washington State College, reports the use of dried filter paper strips in preserving a phage of Streptococcus lactis for five or six years without vacuum seal or temperature control. This process requires artificial drying of the strips after soaking in the phage suspension. Your method would obviate such drying. I am trying to persuade him to try the silica gel method on his phage.

With cordial regards.

Sincerely,

Freeman A. Weiss

Freeman A. Weiss
Curator

FAW/ap