

SYNTEX, S. A.

APARTADO 2679

MEXICO, D. F.

CARL DJERASSI
VICEPRESIDENTE
INVESTIGACION

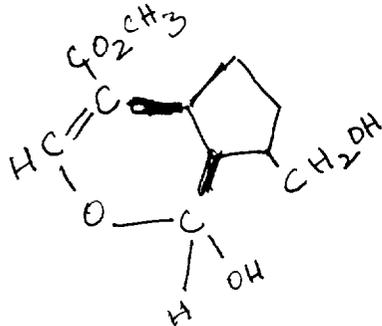
June 10, 1960

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Medical School
Stanford University
Palo Alto, California

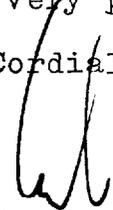
Dear Joshua:

Some time ago we isolated from a Mexican plant a new colorless crystalline substance named genipin, and have recently proved its structure. Genipin has the unusual property of turning the skin blue when placed in contact with some crystals, and we have found that it also forms blue complexes with amino acids. Recently some genipin was injected into mice, whereupon they turned blue and excreted blue urine. It appears that genipin reacts with amino acids as well as with proteins, and I am wondering whether there may be some useful histochemical applications of this substance.

If you would like to try it for some staining experiments, I would suggest that you call Dr. Eisenbraun and ask him to give you some of the material. Dr. Nakano in my laboratory has been working with it and he could recrystallize some to give you a very pure specimen.



Cordially,


Carl Djerassi

CD/mf-s

cc: Dr. E. J. Eisenbraun