Table 4. Removal of silica from magnesite ore in the fermenter after treatment with the mutant U_90_N_60_E_7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of days</th>
<th>Silica content* in ore (%)</th>
<th>Total silica removal from ore (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Control</td>
<td>Treated with bacteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Control: No bacterial inoculum was added to the fermenter. * = average of three replicates.


Received 4 August 1992, accepted 5 April 1993

Taxonomic status of rust on mulberry in India

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The morphology of the rust fungus on mulberry (Morus alba L.) reported by earlier workers is not in conformity with generic concepts of any of the genera to which the fungus has been assigned, viz. Caemca, Aecidium, Uredo and Cerotelium. The fungus shows characteristic features of the form genus Peridiospora Kamat & Sathe apud Sathe, based on peridial characters and urediniospores. Detailed histopathological studies revealed that the rust fungus occurring on mulberry in India is Peridiospora. Hence the new combination Peridiospora mori (Barclay) Prasad et al., comb. nov. has been suggested for the fungus.

Caemca mori Barclay, Aecidium mori Barclay, Uredo mori Barclay sensu Saccardo, Aecidium mori (Barclay) Sydow et Butler, and Cerotelium fici (Cast) Arthur have been reported to be the causal organisms of rust disease in Morus alba L. and M. indica L.

The review of literature reveals that this rust is known to the Indian workers in the field either as Aecidium mori Barclay7 or as Cerotelium fici (Cast) Arthur5,6. It is noteworthy in this connection that Barclay himself had described this rust under Caemca mori and as such the transfer effected as Aecidium mori (Barclay) Syd. & Butler is a valid transfer. As far as its placement under Cerotelium fici, it was made out of the confusion arising due to the fact that Barclay while describing the rust under Aecidium mori also included the rust on Ficus because the uredinal sorii of Uredo fici Cast. are in fact peridiate and ostiolate. Subsequently, however, the two rusts namely Aecidium mori and Cerotelium fici were separately treated by Sydow & Butler5. Cerotelium fici, therefore, is a misnomer for the rust on mulberry in India. The telial stage for the rust on mulberry has not been reported so far, and the rust is believed to be prevailing in its anamorphic state only.

During the course of studies on rust fungus on mulberry in Karnataka, it was noticed that the rust fungus prevailing in the state is not in conformity with generic concepts of either Caemca, Aecidium or Uredo and therefore, it was decided to undertake the detailed studies of the same.

Leaves infected with the rust fungus were collected from the mulberry farm of the Institute (KSSDI). The rust was found to manifest itself on the lower (adaxial) surface of leaves in the form of yellowish to reddish brown blisters grouped together (Figure 1).
The blister-like pustules measured 0.4 to 0.5 mm in diameter. Each pustule was provided with a central ostiole, through which creamish masses of spores were seen coming out. On microscopic examination the sectional view of the pustule revealed that it was a uredinial sorus bearing sessile or subsessile urediniospores (Figure 2). The uredinium was ostiolate and was provided with the peripheral thin cellular peridium, each cell measuring 18(21)×5(7)μm. The urediniospores were subglobose, oval to pyriform in shape and admearing 15(24)–18(30)×12–15(18)μm and the surface was echinulate to verrucose (Figure 3). The urediniospores were provided with four equatorial germ pores. On germination they produced germ tube of 6–8 μm length (Figure 4).

The germ tube prior to entering the leaves produced
characteristic appressorium from which infection hypha emerged (Figure 5).

The various characters revealed by the uredinial sorus of the rust under the present consideration is in conformity with the form-genus *Peridiopora* Kamat & Sathe apud Sathe9,10.

In Uredinales, by and large genera are identified primarily on the features of telial state. Many rusts where telial state has not been discovered, assigning them to any particular genus is rather difficult. Since rust fungi exhibit host specialization this attribute has been exploited by mycologists for making a detailed study of aecia and uredia and assigning them to different form genera.

The entire structure of the uredinal sorus is also in conformity with the structure of *Caemor mori* Barclay. It is, therefore, essential to transfer the species to the form-genus *Peridiopora* and this is effected here as *Peridiopora mori* (Barclay) Prasad K. V. et al. comb. nov. (= *Caemor mori* Barclay in *J. Asiatic Soc. Bengal*, 1890, 59, 97 Figs.).

In conclusion, the rust fungus infecting *Morus alba* L. in India is *Peridiopora mori* (Barclay) Prasad *et al.* and the other names become synonyms of the same.


ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS. We thank Dr. A. V. Sathe for his advice on taxonomy and Dr. S. Joshi for help in histopathological studies. KVP thanks Dr. S. B. Dandekar, Dr. U. B. Bongale and Dr. J. Sukumar, KSSDI for encouragement.

Received 19 December 1992; revised accepted 6 March 1993

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**Isolation of a chlorate-resistant line from protoplast cultures of *Hyoscyamus muticus* L.**

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A chlorate-resistant line resistant to 40 mM potassium chlorate (KClO₃) has been isolated from suspension culture protoplast derived colonies (30-35 celled stage) of *Hyoscyamus muticus*. In comparison to the wild type, the selected line CI01 was resistant nearly 3-fold decrease in the nitrate reductase enzyme activity (157.2% units g fresh wt.). This characterization of CI01 was reflected in their slower growth on medium having NO₃ as sole nitrogen source.

Isolation of conditional mutants such as nitrate reductase deficient, amino acid and vitamin requiring mutants in *vitro* and their use have led to the progress of developing a majority of somatic hybrids today. The importance of such mutations is further enhanced in developing universal hybridizers. Although several technical advances such as fluorescent activated cell sorting (FACS) and microculture techniques have emerged for the efficient screening of somatic hybrids, the importance of inducing selectable markers to desirable genetic background still prevails. It has been studied earlier that the screening for chlorate resistance can indirectly result in recovery of nitrate reductase (NR) deficient mutants. In this communication we report the isolation of a chlorate-resistant line from protoplast cultures of *Hyoscyamus muticus*. The importance of this mutant with respect to somatic hybridization will be discussed.

Protoplasts from suspension culture cells were isolated according to the method reported earlier. Dose response studies were conducted to determine the concentration of potassium chlorate (KClO₃) which completely inhibited the growth of cells. Protoplast-derived colonies (30-35 celled stage) were plated on the medium incorporated with 10, 20, 30 and 40 mM concentrations of KClO₃. 20 mM KClO₃ totally inhibited growth. Selection pressure was applied at a suprathal dose (40 mM). Resistant colonies were selected after 8-10 weeks of growth in the stress medium. Chlorate-resistant callus was subjected to characterization by testing its capacity to utilize nitrate as the sole nitrogen source in relation to ammonium and other reduced forms of nitrogen such as casein hydrolysate. Regeneration of plants from a chlorate-resistant line was obtained.

Assay for nitrate reductase activity was measured by the *in vitro* assay method. Tissue samples included callus and leaves of wild type and chlorate-resistant lines and leaves of in *vitro* grown double mutant plants of *Nicottiana tabacum*. Double mutant of *N. tabacum*, obtained through the courtesy of Dr. D. Pental, Tata Energy Research Institute, New Delhi, India was used as standard check.

Chlorate-resistant lines were selected by incorporating 40 mM of KClO₃ in suprathal dose. The screening for chlorate resistance was carried out by placing 1 x 10³ - 5 x 10³ protoplast-derived colonies (Table 1). After eight weeks of incubation on the stress medium, a total of six colonies survived in the first passage. Out of