



December 9, 1974

STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
Department of Genetics  
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Dr. Jakob Nilesch  
Ciba-Geigy AG  
CH-4002 Basel  
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Dear Dr. Nilesch,

Thank you for your letter of November 25th. I appreciate your taking the trouble to look into the question of agarase. I had not been aware of the Calbiochem prep and we will certainly test it.

I am glad to see that you are keeping your eyes open for literature in genetic engineering. The author of the reference you mentioned was kind enough to send me a copy. I am also sending you something that I may or may not already have given you. I am delighted to see that some attention is being given towards trying to get practical applications from the theoretical research of the last three decades.

With respect to Dr. Lebet, he certainly does come with formidable credentials. Yes, in view of the financial situation here it would be almost indispensable for him to have his own funding with respect to salary and travel. My own laboratory is preoccupied with the fractionation DNA from bacteria, the rejoining of DNA molecules, and the genetic consequences of their reinsertion into bacteria. This does involve a considerable bridging of biochemical and biological expertise and I do not know if it conforms to the list of interests that you mentioned for Dr. Lebet. Certainly, there are some laboratories in Dr. Kornberg's department that might be a closer fit. Please advise me if you had in mind that we should consider him as a prospect for my own laboratory - which is rather more biologically oriented - or whether I should concentrate on bringing this material to the attention of Dr. Kornberg or Dr. Hogness who are more immediately preoccupied with problems of membranes and of regulation of synthesis. With his excellent recommendations I should think that he would have some choice about where he might be accepted, so I think it is important that his preferences be clearly stated before proceeding further.

Sincerely yours,

*Joshua Lederberg*  
Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

*Ron Case also told me of his visit to Basel and while the outcome was disappointing it was with the same understanding of the reasons that you wrote.*

JL/rr  
Enclosure

LT. J. P. KENNEDY, JR. LABORATORIES FOR MOLECULAR MEDICINE, DEDICATED TO RESEARCH IN MENTAL RETARDATION

*J*

## Agar-Decomposition and "Agarase"

Agarase producers: *Bacillus gelaticus*  
*Agarobacterium* sp. (Bergey VII, 1957, S.322-328)  
*Vibrio beijerinckii*  
*Vibrio fuscus*  
*Vibrio granii*  
*Vibrio agarliquefaciens*  
*Vibrio purpureus*  
*Pseudomonas iridescens*  
*Pseudomonas gelidicola*  
*Pseudomonas droebachense*  
(Cytophaga)

### References:

- Stanier, R.Y.: *J.Bacteriol.* 42, 527 (1941)
- Ishimatsu, K.: *Hakko Kogaku Zasshi J. Ferment.Technol.* 30, 51 (1952)
- DeLaey, M. & L. Massart: *Arch.internat.physiol.* 64, 127 (1958)
- Swartz, M.N. & N. Gordon: *J.Bacteriol.* 77, 403 (1959)