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VEGETATIVE CHARACTERIZATION OF 67 GENOTYPES OF THE GENUS PERSEA FROM THE GERMPLASM BANK MAINTAINED BY LA FUNDACIÓN SALVADOR SÁNCHEZ COLÍN CICTAMEX S.C.

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Genetic variability of the genus *Persea* is the source to carry out new breeding programs in avocado. This diversity is in danger due to genetic erosion that decreases genetic variability. Thus, a collection of genotypes is being conserved by the "Fundación Salvador Sánchez Colín-CICTAMEX" in Coatepec Harinas, Mexico State, Mexico and most of them have already been characterized. In the present work, the advances made on the similarity among them are presented. Nineteen different vegetative characteristics were evaluated in 67 *Persea* genotypes. Cluster analysis, based on 7 discriminant traits, allowed the differentiation of 17 groups. Principal component 1 includes the shape and the pubescence of the lower surface of the leaves. Principal component 2 includes the shape of the leaf base, the presence of lenticels in young shoots, and the color of the young leaves. Principal component 3 includes young shoot length and internode length in young shoots. There was a tendency of the Mexican and Guatemalan races to group together but other genotypes that were not included in any of those two groups were also observed: *Persea cinerascens* (Mexico), *P. steyermarkii* (Mexico), *P. shiedeana* (Guatemala), *P. nubigena* (El Rodeo, Chiapas), Martín Grande (hybrid), the clone Guadalupe 1 (Mexican race), Luis XVI (Mexican race), Las nubes (Antillean) and Teni (Guatemalan).