

## SOMATIC EMBRYOGENESIS IN AVOCADO (*PERSEA AMERICANA* MILL. CV. HASS)

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*In vitro* culture of nucellar avocado tissue (*Persea americana* Mill.) cv. Hass and subsequent induction of somatic embryogenesis has been carried out. Segments of nucellar tissue were placed on a culture medium with mineral salts (MS), auxins (picloram, IBA and 2,4-D) and supplemented with casein hydrolysate. The addition of ascorbic acid and L-cysteine to reduce necrosis, under darkness and low light intensity conditions, was studied. Necrosis was reduced 100% with the immersion of the nucellar tissue in ascorbic acid (400 mg/l) before *in vitro* culture. On the induction medium, 20% of embryogenic calli were developed with 2,4-D (1 mg/l) after 50 days at 25°C in dark conditions. However, the embryogenic calli showed a better development in a medium with the addition of picloram (4 mg/l) and IBA (0.4 mg/l). The multiplication of the embryogenic calli was carried out under low light intensity conditions and on a medium with no growth regulators for 4 weeks; embryos matured on a medium gelified with agar-agar 20 g/l and 10% germinated after a two steps incubation: first, on a medium with low quantity of nitrates and no growth regulators and, later, on MS medium with 0.3 mg/l BA.