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2024 SEA Faculty Meeting Abstract

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Optimizing Factors for Isolating Phages from Soil Samples: Seeking Suggestions and Observations

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Phages are present in practically all environments, with an estimated more than 10^31 phage units worldwide. Despite the challenges of isolating them from soil samples, it's important to understand the factors influencing their presence to improve our success rate. This knowledge will help students make better decisions and feel less discouraged. Although the process of not finding phages can help develop important skills, having a more successful approach would make the course more efficient and help us make the most of our resources. We have already examined some factors and identified the optimal conditions for isolating a greater variety of *Microbacterium foliorum* phages in soil samples from Culiacan, Sinaloa, Mexico: wet soil samples taken at temperatures of 25°C to 28°C, at a depth of less than 8 cm, and in September. However, we are also interested in exploring additional factors to enhance our understanding. Therefore, we welcome any suggestions, observations, and comments that could help us in this endeavor.