



Pergamon

Tetrahedron 56 (2000) 7805–7810

TETRAHEDRON

Synthesis of Antioxidant Isoflavone Fatty Acid Esters¹

Philip T. Lewis,^a Kristiina Wähälä,^{a,*} Antti Hoikkala,^a Ilpo Mutikainen,^b Qing-He Meng,^c Herman Adlercreutz^d and Matti J. Tikkanen^c

^aLaboratory of Organic Chemistry, Department of Chemistry, P.O. Box 55, FIN-00014, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

^bLaboratory of Inorganic Chemistry, Department of Chemistry, P.O. Box 55, FIN-00014, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

^cDepartment of Medicine, Helsinki University Central Hospital, Helsinki, Finland

^dDepartment of Clinical Chemistry and Institute for Preventive Medicine, Nutrition and Cancer, Folkhälsan Research Centre, P.O. Box 60, FIN-00014, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

Received 27 September 1999; revised 13 July 2000; accepted 3 August 2000

Abstract—LDL antioxidant mono- and dioleates and -stearates of the isoflavones genistein and daidzein are synthesised in high yield with excellent regioselectivity. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

It is widely acknowledged that the oxidation of Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) plays an important role in the advancement of atherosclerosis.^{2–4} It is known that circulating plasma LDL is protected against oxidation,⁵ probably owing to the high concentration of water-soluble antioxidants present in plasma.⁶ Oxidation of LDL, therefore, mainly occurs in the artery walls. Although LDL contains natural antioxidants such as tocopherols, β -carotene and ubiquinone,⁷ these endogenous antioxidants are thought to contribute only about 30% to the prevention of oxidation.⁸ It has hence been suggested that additional (exogenous) lipophilic antioxidants carried in LDL could be responsible for the remaining 70% of antioxidant activity. In connection with this, it has been shown that people consuming diets rich in soybean products have a lower incidence of cardiovascular disease.⁹ This is thought to be due to soybeans being rich in phytoestrogen compounds, especially the isoflavones genistein and daidzein. In vitro studies have in fact shown that both genistein and daidzein are potent antioxidants.^{10–12} Unfortunately, neither genistein nor daidzein, in their aglycone form, are likely to be considered as being responsible for any of the unaccounted for antioxidant activity of LDL due to their low lipophilicity. We have reported¹³ that the intake of soy-derived isoflavones resulted in a reduced susceptibility of LDL particles to oxidation despite the fact that only trace amounts of isoflavones could be detected in the LDLs. However, in view of reports suggesting that endogenous human estrogens are present in

lipoproteins as fatty acid esters,^{14–18} it seemed possible that phytoestrogens such as genistein and daidzein could also undergo esterification in vivo. It is easily envisaged that such compounds could be responsible for the additional antioxidant activity.

We now present the first chemical synthesis of these isoflavone fatty acid esters. The method is both high yielding and regioselective, producing the 7-mono-, 4'-mono- or 7,4'-diesterates and oleates of both genistein and daidzein at will.

Our recent results show that fatty acid esters of both genistein and daidzein have antioxidant properties and are readily incorporated into LDL particles in vitro.¹⁹

Results and Discussion

We have shown earlier that in compounds such as genistein **1** and daidzein **2**, the 7-OH exhibits a hundred fold acidity compared to the 4'-hydroxy group (CAMEO²⁰ calculated values) which can be exploited in selective mono-*O*-alkylations of these isoflavones.²¹ Rapid reaction of a 7-phenolate from **1** or **2** and one equivalent of potassium *t*-butoxide in DMF with an acyl chloride (1 equiv.) yielded the isoflavone 7-mono fatty acid esters in high yields, with the isoflavone 7,4'-diesters being formed as minor products (Table 1). The corresponding 4'-monoesters were not produced under these conditions. For a selective synthesis of the isoflavone 4'-monoesters, the 7,4'-diphenolates were prepared by reaction of the isoflavone aglycone with 2.2–3.3 equiv. of base. The greater nucleophilicity of the 4'-phenolate compared to the 7-phenolate resulted in a selective reaction with acyl chlorides (1 equiv.) producing the isoflavone 4' fatty acid

Keywords: isoflavone; fatty acid ester; stearates; oleates; phytoestrogens; isoflavone conjugate.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +358-9-191-40356; fax: +358-9-191-40357; e-mail: Kristiina.Wahala@helsinki.fi

Table 1. Results from the synthesis of genistein and daidzein stearates and oleates, **3–14**

Isoflavone (0.4 mmols)	Base (mmols)	Acyl chloride (mmols)	Major product	Yield %
Daidzein	0.4	Stearoyl (0.44)	3	82
Daidzein	0.88	Stearoyl (0.4)	4	76
Daidzein	0.88	Stearoyl (0.88)	5	90
Genistein	0.4	Stearoyl (0.44)	6	84
Genistein	1.32	Stearoyl (0.4)	7	77
Genistein	1.32	Stearoyl (0.8)	8	96
Daidzein	0.4	Oleoyl (0.44)	9	81
Daidzein	0.88	Oleoyl (0.4)	10	79
Daidzein	0.88	Oleoyl (0.88)	11	92
Genistein	0.4	Oleoyl (0.44)	12	87
Genistein	1.32	Oleoyl (0.4)	13	80
Genistein	1.32	Oleoyl (0.8)	14	95

esters. Again yields were high and the corresponding 7-monoesters were not formed in these reactions.

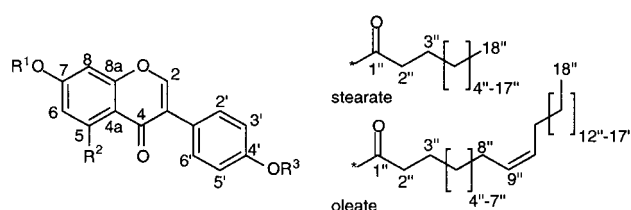
Finally, using an excess of base and acyl chloride, isoflavone 7,4'-diesters were obtained in high yields. The hydrogen-bond stabilised 5-hydroxy group in genistein did not react at 30°C, thus allowing genistein 7,4'-diesters to be produced in preference to genistein 5,7,4'-triesters.

Characterisation

The determination of the site of reaction in the polyhydroxy-isoflavones genistein and daidzein was carried out by NMR, showing substantial downfield shifts for the aromatic protons *ortho* to OH upon acylation (Tables 2 and 3). For example, the esterification of the 7-hydroxy group of daidzein results in the H-8 doublet and H-6 doublet of

Table 2. ¹H NMR of daidzein and genistein stearates. 200 MHz, CDCl₃, *J* in Hz. Compound numbers correspond to Fig. 1. The two-prime signals refer to both acyl chains of the diesters

Proton	Compound					
	3	4	5	6	7	8
2	8.0 (s)	8.0 (s)	8.0 (s)	7.9 (s)	7.8 (s)	7.8 (s)
5	8.3 (d) 8.8	8.3 (d) 8.6	8.3 (d) 8.4			
6	7.2 (dd) 8.8, 2.0	6.9 (dd) 8.6, 2.2	7.2 (dd) 8.4, 2.2	6.7 (d) 2.0	6.3 (d) 2.2	6.6 (d) 2.1
8	7.3 (d) 2.0	6.9 (d) 2.2	7.3 (d) 2.2	6.6 (d) 2.2	6.2 (d) 2.2	6.8 (d) 2.1
2', 6'	7.4 (d) 8.4	7.6 (d) 8.8	7.4 (d) 8.0	7.4 (d) 8.8	7.5 (d) 8.4	7.5 (d) 8.4
3', 5'	6.9 (d) 8.4	7.2 (d) 8.8	6.8 (d) 8.0	6.9 (d) 8.8	7.2 (d) 8.4	7.2 (d) 8.4
2''	2.6 (t) 7.4	2.6 (t) 7.4	2.6 (t) 7.8	2.6 (t) 7.4	2.6 (t) 7.4	2.6 (t) 7.7
3''	1.8 (m)	1.8 (m)	1.8 (m)	1.8 (m)	1.8 (m)	1.8 (m)
4''–17''	1.3 (m)	1.3 (m)	1.3 (m)	1.3 (m)	1.3 (m)	1.3 (m)
18''	0.9 (t) 6.2	0.9 (t) 6.2	0.9 (t) 6.3	0.9 (t) 6.3	0.9 (t) 6.3	0.9 (t) 6.8



R¹=R²=R³=H Daidzein **1**

R¹=R³=H, R²=OH Genistein **2**

R¹=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃, R²=R³=H Daidzein 7-stearate **3**

R¹=R²=H, R³=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃ Daidzein 4'-stearate **4**

R¹=R³=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃, R²=H Daidzein 4',7'-distearate **5**

R¹=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃, R²=OH, R³=H Genistein 7-stearate **6**

R¹=H, R²=OH, R³=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃ Genistein 4'-stearate **7**

R¹=R³=CO(CH₂)₁₆CH₃, R²=OH Genistein 4',7'-distearate **8**

R¹=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃, R²=R³=H Daidzein 7-oleate **9**

R¹=R²=H, R³=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃ Daidzein 4'-oleate **10**

R¹=R³=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃, R²=H Daidzein 4',7'-dioleate **11**

R¹=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃, R²=OH, R³=H Genistein 7-oleate **12**

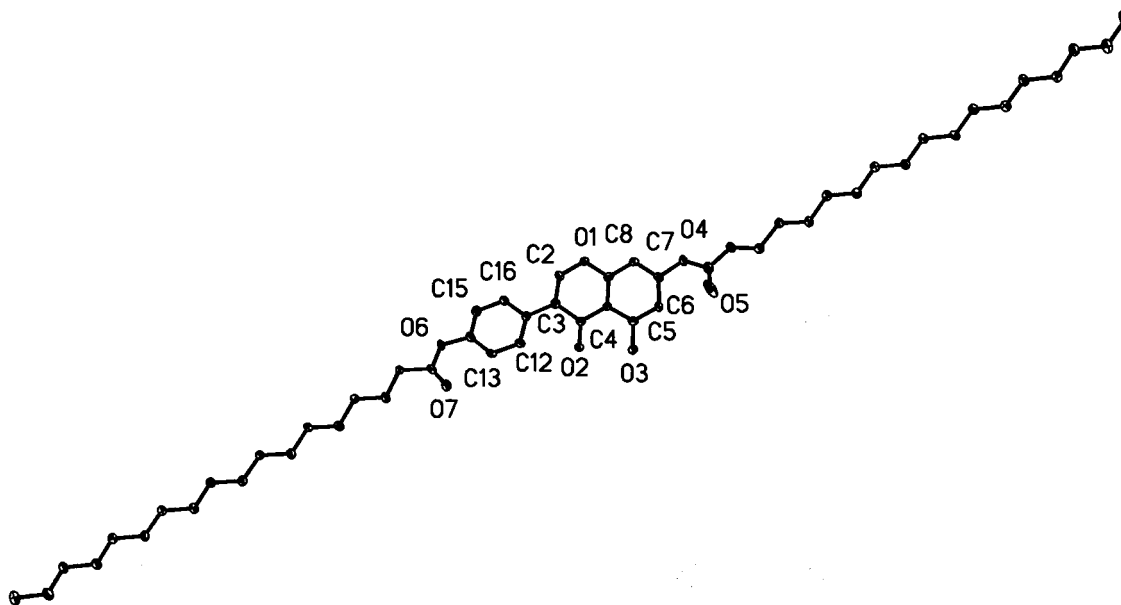
R¹=H, R²=OH, R³=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃ Genistein 4'-oleate **13**

R¹=R³=CO(CH₂)₇CH=CH(CH₂)₇CH₃, R²=OH Genistein 4',7'-dioleate **14**

Figure 1. Structures of isoflavone aglycones genistein and daidzein, and isoflavone mono- and distearates and oleates synthesised.

Table 5. ^{13}C NMR of daidzein and genistein oleates. 50 MHz for compounds **9**, **12**, **13**, **14** and 125 MHz for **10**, **11**. The two-prime signals refers to both acyl chains of the diesters

Carbon	Compound					
	9	10	11	12	13	14
2	152.8	153.1	153.2	153.8	153.1	153.9
3	122.0	127.9	124.8	122.5	123.1	123.7
4	176.2	176.3	175.5	181.2	180.3	181.0
5	127.7	129.4	127.8	162.2	157.8	162.4
6	119.5	115.6	119.7	105.3	99.6	105.6
7	156.1	162.1	154.7	156.1	162.8	156.2
8	110.8	102.8	110.9	100.9	94.0	100.9
4a	123.1	117.6	122.2	109.7	115.3	109.4
8a	156.6	158.1	156.7	156.8	162.1	156.9
1'	125.3	124.2	129.1	124.3	128.1	127.8
2', 6'	130.1	130.1	130.0	130.0	129.9	129.7
3', 5'	115.6	121.7	121.7	115.5	121.7	121.9
4'	154.5	150.7	150.9	156.2	150.7	151.1
1''	171.4	172.6	171.4, 172.2	171.7	172.3	171.2, 172.2
2''	34.4	34.4	34.4	34.4	34.4	34.4
3''	24.7	25.3	24.8, 24.9	24.7	24.9	24.8, 24.9
4''–7''	29.0–29.7	29.2–30.0	29.1–29.7	29.0–29.7	29.1–29.7	29.1–29.8
12''–15''						
8'', 11''	27.2 & 27.1	29.1	27.2	27.2	27.2	27.2
9'', 10''	130.5	129.7	129.6	130.1	129.6	130
16''	31.9	31.9	31.9	31.9	31.9	31.9
17''	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7	22.7
18''	14.1	14.1	14.1	14.1	14.1	14.1

**Figure 2.** View of genistein-7,4'-distearate **8**. Thermal ellipsoids at 30% probability level. Enolic oxygen O3 (C5–O3 1.346(7) Å) forms an internal hydrogen bond with keto oxygen O2 (C4–O2 1.255(7) Å), the O2...O3 distance being 2.544 Å, O2...H3A distance 1.789 and O3–H3A–O2 angle 148.6°.**Table 6.** Selected bond lengths [Å] and angles [deg] for **8**

O(1)–C(2)	1.350(7)	O(3)–C(5)–C(6)	119.9(6)
O(1)–C(10)	1.362(7)	O(3)–C(5)–C(9)	119.4(5)
C(4)–O(2)	1.255(7)	C(8)–C(7)–O(4)	114.5(5)
C(5)–O(3)	1.346(7)	C(6)–C(7)–O(4)	122.2(5)
C(7)–O(4)	1.385(7)	O(1)–C(10)–C(8)	116.8(5)
C(14)–O(6)	1.411(7)	O(1)–C(10)–C(9)	120.3(5)
O(6)–C(18)	1.351(7)	C(15)–C(14)–O(6)	117.0(6)
C(18)–O(7)	1.182(8)	C(13)–C(14)–O(6)	120.4(6)
O(4)–C(37)	1.356(8)	C(18)–O(6)–C(14)	121.1(5)
C(37)–O(5)	1.193(8)	O(7)–C(18)–O(6)	124.1(6)
O(2)–C(4)–C(9)	122.0(5)	C(37)–O(4)–C(7)	122.9(5)
O(2)–C(4)–C(3)	122.9(5)	O(5)–C(37)–O(4)	121.8(6)

Experimental

NMR spectra were recorded on a Varian Gemini 2000 or Bruker Avance 500 spectrometers. IR spectra were recorded on a Perkin–Elmer One FTIR instrument on KBr disks. UV spectra were recorded on a Cary SE UV-VIS-NIR spectrophotometer in 96% EtOH. Mass spectra were measured on a JEOL JMS SX102 mass spectrometer. Melting points were recorded on an Electrothermal melting point apparatus and are uncorrected.

X-ray crystal structure analysis

Crystal data for 8. ($C_{51}H_{76}O_7$) $M=801.12$, monoclinic $P2_1$ (no. 4), $a=7.9820(16)$, $b=7.2590(15)$, $c=39.700(8)$ Å, $\beta=93.93(3)^\circ$, $V=2294.9(8)$ Å³, $Z=2$, $D_c=1.159$ g cm⁻³, $T=193(1)$ K, $\mu(Cu-K_\alpha)=0.589$ mm⁻¹, $F(000)=876$, $R_1=0.0727$, $wR_2=0.1796$ with $I>2\sigma(I)$, $S=1.000$, 4628 data collected, 2595 $I>2\sigma(I)$, 524 parameters.

A colorless crystal with dimensions of 0.40×0.20×0.08 mm was mounted to the glass fiber using the oil-drop method.²³ The data was collected using CAD4 diffractometer, graphite monochromatized Cu-K α radiation ($\lambda=1.54178$ Å), in $\omega-2\theta$ -mode. Data reduction was done using the XCAD package.²⁴ The intensity data were corrected for Lorentz and polarization effects and for absorption and extinction. The structure was solved using direct methods. All non-H atoms were refined anisotropically. H atoms were refined using a riding model. The final difference Fourier map had peak maxima of 0.345 and minima -0.458 eÅ⁻³. Programs from the Siemens SHELXTL-package²⁵ and SHELXL-97²⁶ were used for the solution, refinement and graphical representation of the structure. Full crystallographic data has been deposited at Cambridge Crystallographic Data Centre and is available as supplementary information.

Synthetic procedure

A solution of isoflavone (0.4 mmol) and *t*-BuOK (see Table 1 for mmol) in dry DMF (15 ml) is stirred at 30°C for 2.5 h under Ar. The fatty acid chloride (see Table 1 for mmol) in DMF (2 ml) is added to this solution and the reaction continued for 2.5 h. Pouring into ice water followed by extraction with ether/ethyl acetate (1/1), washing with aqueous NaHCO₃, drying and removal of solvent under reduced pressure gives the crude product. Purification by flash chromatography (silica, CHCl₃/MeOH, 95/5) yields the isoflavone fatty acid ester. For ¹H NMR of the stearates, see Table 2. For ¹H NMR of the oleates, see Table 3. For ¹³C NMR of the stearates, see Table 4, and for ¹³C NMR of the oleates, see Table 5.

Daidzein-7-monostearate 3. 82%; white solid (acetone) mp 136–38°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 260, (4.4), 307 (3.9); IR 3442, 1749 and 1640 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₄O₅ 520.3182, found 520.3189; m/z 520 (M⁺), 254 (100%).

Daidzein-4'-monostearate 4. 76%; white solid (acetone); mp 128–129°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 253 (4.4), 297 (4.0); IR 3322, 1736 and 1643 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₄O₅ 520.3182, found 520.3189; m/z 520 (M⁺), 254 (100%).

Daidzein-7,4'-distearate 5. 90%; white solid (acetone); mp 99–101°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 252 (4.6), 304 (3.9); IR 1748 and 1646 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₅₁H₇₈O₆ 786.5798, found 786.5789; m/z 786 (M⁺), 520 (15%), 254 (100%).

Genistein-7-monostearate 6. 84%; white solid (acetone); mp 123–125°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 260 (4.3), 260 (4.52); IR 3426, 1738 and 1651 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₄O₆ 536.3141, found 536.3137; m/z 536 (M⁺), 270 (65%), 98 (100%).

Genistein-4'-monostearate 7. 77%; white solid (acetone); mp 115–117°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 262 (4.4); IR 3361, 1747 and 1659 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₄O₆ 536.3141, found 536.3138; m/z 536 (M⁺), 270 (70%), 98 (100%).

Genistein-7,4'-distearate 8. 96%; white solid (acetone); mp 89–91°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 257 (4.5); IR 1767, 1751 and 1648 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. 802.5742 for C₅₁H₇₈O₇, found 802.5890; m/z 802 (M⁺), 536 (40%), 270 (100%).

Daidzein-7-monooleate 9. 81%; white solid (acetone–methanol); mp 104–106°C; IR 3422, 1760 and 1642 cm⁻¹; UV nm (log ϵ) 259 (4.5); HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₂O₅ 518.3042, found 518.3032; m/z 518 (M⁺), 254 (100%).

Daidzein-4'-monooleate 10. 79%; white semi-solid; UV nm (log ϵ) 250 (4.7), 300 (4.3); IR 3319, 1739 and 1645 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₂O₅ 518.3042, found 518.3044; m/z 518 (M⁺), 254 (100%).

Daidzein-7,4'-dioleate 11. White semi-solid; UV nm (log ϵ) 250 (4.4), 305 (3.9); IR 1749 (broad) and 1644 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₅₁H₇₄O₆ 782.5485, found 782.5469; m/z 782 (M⁺), 518 (10%), 254 (100%).

Genistein-7-monooleate 12. 87%; white solid (acetone–methanol); mp 80–82°C; UV nm (log ϵ) 260 (4.5); IR 3420, 1762 and 1648 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₂O₆ 534.3000, found 534.2981; m/z 534 (M⁺), 270 (100%).

Genistein-4'-monooleate 13. 80%; white semi-solid; UV nm (log ϵ) 261 (4.7); IR 3395, 1750 and 1651 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. for C₃₃H₄₂O₆ 534.3000, found 534.2982; m/z 534 (M⁺), 270 (100%).

Genistein-7,4'-dioleate 14. 95%; white semi-solid; UV nm (log ϵ) 254 (4.4); IR 1764 and 1644 cm⁻¹; HRMS calc. 798.54291 for C₅₁H₇₄O₇, found 798.5535; m/z (range 400–800 m/z) 798 (M⁺), 534 (100%).

Acknowledgements

We thank Dr. Jorma Matikainen for running the mass spectra and Mr. Seppo Kaltia for running the 2D NMR spectra. Financial support for P. L. from the Finnish Graduate School of Bioorganic Chemistry is gratefully acknowledged. K. W. is grateful for a grant from the Rector of the University of Helsinki and Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation.

References

1. Preliminary report: Academic Dissertation, Philip Lewis, University of Helsinki, 1998.
2. Regnström, J.; Nilsson, J.; Tornvall, P.; Landou, C.; Hamsten, A. *Lancet* **1992**, 339, 1183–1186.
3. Ross, R. *Nature* **1993**, 362, 801–809.
4. Steinberg, D.; Parthasarthy, S.; Carew, T. E.; Khoo, J. C.; Witstum, J. S. *N. Engl. J. Med.* **1989**, 320, 915–924.

5. Frei, B.; Stocker, R.; Ames, B. N. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A* **1988**, *85*, 9748–9752.
6. Frei, B. *Crit. Rev. Food Sci. Nutr.* **1995**, *35*, 83–98.
7. Esterbauer, H.; Dieber-Rothender, M.; Striegl, G.; Waeg, G. *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.* **1991**, *53*, 314S–321S.
8. Esterbauer, H.; Ramos, P. *Rev. Physiol. Biochem. Pharmacol.* **1995**, *127*, 31–64.
9. Adlercreutz, H. *Scand. J. Clin. Lab. Invest.* **1990**, *50*, 3–23.
10. Naim, M.; Gestetner, B.; Bondi, A.; Birk, Y. *J. Agric. Food Chem.* **1976**, *24*, 1174–1177.
11. Wei, H.; Bowen, R.; Cai, Q.; Barnes, S.; Wang, Y. *Proc. Soc. Exp. Biol.* **1995**, *208*, 124–130.
12. Hodgson, J. M.; Croft, K. D.; Puddey, I. B.; Mori, T. A.; Beilin, L. J. *J. Nutr. Biochem.* **1996**, *7*, 664–669.
13. Tikkanen, M. J.; Wähälä, K.; Ojala, S.; Vihma, V.; Adlercreutz, H. *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U.S.A* **1998**, *95*, 3106–3110.
14. Janocko, L.; Hochberg, R. B. *Science* **1983**, *222*, 1334–1336.
15. Leszczynski, D. E.; Schafer, R. M. *Lipids* **1990**, *25*, 711–718.
16. Leszczynski, D. E.; Schafer, R. M. *Biochim. Biophys. Acta* **1991**, *1083*, 18–28.
17. Lavallée, B.; Provost, P. R.; Bélanger, A. *Biochim. Biophys. Acta* **1996**, *1299*, 306–312.
18. Shwaery, G. T.; Vita, J. A.; Keaney, J. F. *Circulation* **1997**, *95*, 1378–1385.
19. Meng, Q.-H.; Lewis, P.; Wähälä, K.; Adlercreutz, H.; Tikkanen, M. J. *Biochim. Biophys. Acta* **1999**, *1438*, 369–372.
20. Jorgenson, W. L. CAMEO, Computer Assisted Mechanistic Evaluation of Organic Reactions, Sterling Chemistry Laboratory, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, 06511, USA. Version 1996.0.2.
21. (a) Wähälä, K.; Valo, T.; Brunow, G.; Hase, T. *Finn. Chem. Lett.*, **1989**, *16*, 79–83. (b) Al-Maharik, N.; Kaltia, S.; Wähälä, K. *Mol. Online*, **1999**, *3*, 20–24.
22. Unpublished data.
23. Kottke, T.; Stalke, D. *J. Appl. Crystallogr.* **1953**, *26*, 615.
24. Harms, K.; Wocadio, S. XCAD4-CAD4 Data Reduction, University of Marburg, Germany, 1995
25. Sheldrick, G. M. SHELXTL-PC. Release 5.03 Siemens Analytical X-Ray Instruments Inc., Madison, WI 53719, USA, 1994
26. Sheldrick, G. M. SHELXL-97. Program for the Refinement of Crystal Structures. University of Göttingen, Germany.