

## Supporting Information

### Catalytic promiscuity of ancestral esterases and hydroxynitrile lyases

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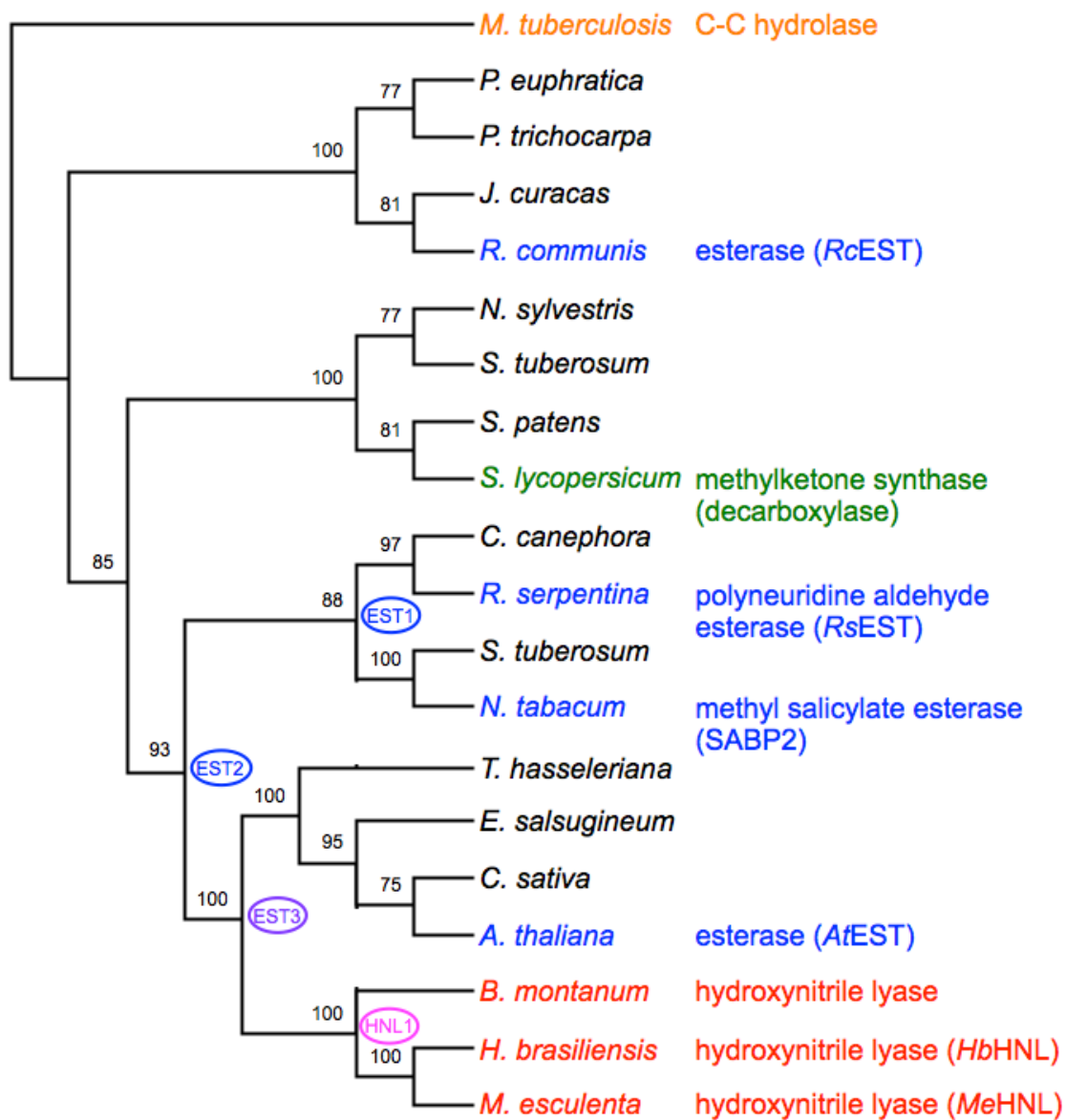
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**Figure S1.** Cladogram showing the hydroxynitrile lyases (red text) in the  $\alpha/\beta$ -hydrolase fold family cluster within a larger group of plant esterases (blue text). The decarboxylase (green text) is more distantly related as are meta-cleavage product hydrolases (orange text, connected by dotted lines). Black text indicates presumed esterases with unverified functions. Ancestral enzymes were reconstructed at the labelled nodes. The numbers on the lines are bootstrap values (in percent). Values above 70% indicate that tree is draw correctly.<sup>1</sup>

|         |                             |                               |                              |                         |                              |
|---------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| RcEST   | MGNRFICMTKKDAGDNGQSR        | SKRLGRSQRKLLADEDDLHR          | QALSMLHQHQLSQRFEQSM          | SRRIGSTTSRKRNLSDPFSN    | GKQVPDFAENIKFKKFLVH          |
| MKS1    | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | ---MEKSMSPFVKKHFLVH          |
| RsEST   | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | ---MHSAAKAKQKQKHFLVH         |
| SABP2   | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MKEGKHFLVH              |
| AtEST   | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MERKHHFLVH              |
| MeHNL   | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MVTAHFVLIH              |
| HbHNL   | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MAFAHFVLIH              |
| HNL1-ML | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MAWAHFVLIH              |
| HNL1-NJ | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MAVAHFVLIH              |
| HNL1    | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MATAHFVLIH              |
| EST3-ML | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MKRQHFVLIH              |
| EST3-NJ | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MERKHHFLVH              |
| EST3    | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MQAKAHFLVH              |
| EST1    | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MAEMKQTKHFVLIH          |
| EST2    | ---                         | ---                           | ---                          | ---                     | -----MAEMKNRTKHFVLIH         |
| RcEST   | CEGFGAWCWYKTVALLLEAG        | LLPTALDLTGSIGHLTDTNS          | VTKLADYSQPLINYLENLEPE        | DEKVIIVGHSITGGACISLAL   | EHPFQKISKAIIFLCATMVSD        |
| MKS1    | TAFHGAWCWYKIVALMRSSG        | HNVTAALDLGASGINPKQALQ         | IPNFSDYLSPLMEFMA5LPA         | NEKIILVGHALGGLAISKAM    | ETFPEKISVAVFLSGLMPGP         |
| RsEST   | GGCLGAWIWKYKLPLEESAG        | HKVTAVDLSAAGINPRRLDE          | IHTFRDYSEPLMEVMA5IPP         | DEKVVLLGHSFSGMSLGLAM    | ETYPEKISVAVFMSAMMPDP         |
| SABP2   | GACHGGWSYKLPLEEAAG          | HKVTALDLAASGTDLRKIEE          | LRTLYDYTLPLMELMESLSA         | DEKVIIVGHSLGGMNLGLAM    | EKYPQKIYAAVFLAAFMPS          |
| AtEST   | NAYHGAWIWKYKLPLEESAG        | HRVTAVELAASGIDPRPIQA          | VETVDEYSKPLIETLKSLEPE        | NEEVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DIFPAKIKVLVFLNAPLPDT         |
| MeHNL   | TICHGAWIWHKLPALERAG         | HKVTALDMAASGIDPRQIEQ          | INSFDEYSEPLLTFLLEKLPQ        | GEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DRYVDKIAAGVFHNSLLPDT         |
| HbHNL   | TICHGAWIWHKLPLEEAALG        | HKVTALDLAASGVDPRQIEE          | IGSFDEYSEPLLTFLLEALPP        | GEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKYCEKIAAAVFHNSVLPDT         |
| HNL1-ML | TICHGAWIWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HKVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEQ          | IGSFDEYSEPLLTFLMESLPQ        | GEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKYPEKIAAAVFHNSVLPDT         |
| HNL1-NJ | TICHGAWIWKYKLPLEESAG        | HKVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEQ          | VGTFEEYSEPLLTFLLESLEPE       | GEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKYPEKISAAVFHNSVLPDT         |
| HNL1    | TICHGAWIWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HKVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEQ          | INTFDEYSEPLLTFLMESLPQ        | GEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKYPEKISAAVFHNSVLPDT         |
| EST3-ML | NACHGAWIWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HRVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEE          | VETVDEYSEPLMEFMESLPE         | NEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKFPEKISVAVFLNAPMPDT         |
| EST3-NJ | GACHGAWIWKYKLPLEESAG        | HRVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEA          | VGTFEEYSEPLLEFLASLPE         | NEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKFPEKISVAVFVNAFMPDT         |
| EST3    | TICHGAWIWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HKVTALDLAASGIDPRQIEE          | LGFVLLRESEPLLTCTDEGEYE       | NEKVIIVGHSFSGGINIALAA   | DKYPEKISVAVFLNAPMPDT         |
| EST1    | GACHGAWIWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HRVTALDLAASGINPKKIEE          | VHTFDEYSEPLMELMASLPP         | NEKVIIVGHSFSGGLNLALAM   | EKFPKISVAVFLTAFMPDT          |
| EST2    | GACHGAWVWKYKLPLEEAAG        | HRVTALDLAASGINPKKIEE          | VHTFDEYSEPLMELMASLPP         | NEKVIIVGHSFSGGLNLALAM   | EKFPKISVAVFLTAFMPDT          |
| RcEST   | GQRPFVFAEELGSA-ERFM         | QESEFLIYNGKDKAPTGFPM          | FEKQMQKGLYFNQSTTKDVA         | LAMVCMRPIPLG---PVMEK    | LSLSPEKYGTGRFFIQTLD          |
| MKS1    | NIDATTVCTKAGSAVL--GQ        | LD-NCVITYENGPNTPTTLI          | AGPKFLATNVYHLSPIEDLA         | LATALVRPLYLYLAEDISKE    | VVLSKRYG5VKKRVIVATE          |
| RsEST   | NHSLTYPFKYNKCPADMM          | LDSQFSTYGNPENP-GMSMI          | LGPQFMALKMFQNC5VEDLE         | LAKMLTRPGSLF-FQDLAKA    | KKFSTERYG5VKKRAYIFCNE        |
| SABP2   | VHNS5FVLEQYNERTPAENW        | LDTQFLPYGSPPEEP-LTSMF         | FGPKFLAHKLYQLCSPEDLA         | LASSLVRP5SLF-MEDLSKA    | KYFTDERF5G5VKKRVIVCTE        |
| AtEST   | THVPSHVLDKYMEMPGL--GL       | GDCEFS5SHET-RNGTMSLLK         | MGPKFMKARLYQNCPIEDYE         | LAKMLHRQGS5FF-TEDLSKK   | EKF5EBEGY5G5VKKRVIVMSSE      |
| MeHNL   | VHSPSYTVEKLLLESLP--DW       | RDTTEYFTFNITGETITTMK          | LGFVLLRESEPLLTCTDEGEYE       | LAKMVMRK5SLF-QNVLAQR    | PKFTEK5G5VKKRVIVWTDQ         |
| HbHNL   | EHCP5YVVDKLM5VFP--DW        | KDTTYFTYTKD-GKEITGLK          | LGTFLLEENLYTLC5PEEYE         | LAKMLTRK5SLF-QNILAKR    | PFFT5EBEGY5IKKRVIVWTDQ       |
| HNL1-ML | VHNPSYVLDKFM5VFP--DW        | KDSEF5NYTYG-NDTITALK          | LGPKLMKENLYTNC5PEEYE         | LAKMLVRK5SLF-QEDLAKR    | ENFT5EBEGY5IKKRVIVYGD5E      |
| HNL1-NJ | VHSPSYVLDKMF5VFP--DW        | KDSVFSNYTNGSNDTITALK          | LGPKLMKENLYTNC5PEEYE         | LAKMLVRK5SLF-QEDLAKR    | EKFTE5EBEGY5IKKRVIVYGD5E     |
| HNL1    | EHS5SYVVDKFM5VFP--DW        | KDTEF5TYTSN-NETTITGMK         | LGPKLMRENLYTNC5PEEYE         | LAKMLTRK55FF-QNDLAQR    | PKFTE5EBEGY5IKKRVIVWTD5E     |
| EST3-ML | THSP5YVLDKFM5M5F5P--DW      | KDSEF5SSY5ES-RNGTMT5LK        | MGPKFMK5N5KLYQ5C5PIED5E      | LAKMLVRQ55FF-KED5LSKK   | EKF5EBEGY55VKKRVIV5MG5DE     |
| EST3-NJ | THSP5YVLDKMF5R5F5P--PW      | LDSEF5SPYEN5P5N5NTMT5LK       | F5G5PKFM5K5LYQ5NC5PIED5E     | LAKMLVRP55SLF-KED5LSKK  | EKF5EBEGY55VKKRVIV5V5DE      |
| EST3    | EHS5PSYVVDK5YMEV5P5P--GW    | RDT5E5F5PYG5SP-NETMT5SMK      | L5G5PKLM5RAN5LYQ5NC5PIED5E   | LAKMLVRQ555FF-QED5LAKR  | KKF5TE5EBEGY55VKKRVIV5MT5NE  |
| EST1    | EHR5PSYVLEK5YNERT5PAE5AW    | LDT5Q5F5SPY5GM5PEEP-LT5SML    | L5G5PKFM5ANK5LYQ5NC5PIED5LE  | LAKMLVRP555SLF-IED5LSKA | KKF5SDE5EBEGY55VQ5RVIV5VC5NE |
| EST2    | EHR5PSYVLEK5YNERT5PAE5AW    | LDT5Q5F5SPY5GN5PEEP-LT5SML    | F5G5PKFM5ANK5LYQ5L5SPIED5LE  | LAKMLVRP555SLF-IED5LSKA | KKF5SDE5EBEGY55V5PRVIV5VC5NE |
| RcEST   | DHALSPDVQEKLVRENPP5EG       | VFKIKGSDHCPFF5SKPQ5SLH        | KILLEIAQIP-----              | -----                   | -----                        |
| MKS1    | NDALKKEFLKLMIEKNP5PDE       | VKEIEGSDHVTMM5SKPQ5QLF        | TTL5LSIANKYK-----            | -----                   | -----                        |
| RsEST   | DK5FP5VE5FQK5W5V5ESV5G5ADK  | VKEIEK5AD5HM5GML5SQ5PREVC     | KCLLDI5SD5-----              | -----                   | -----                        |
| SABP2   | DKGIP5EE5FQ5RW5QIDNIG5VTE   | AIEIK5GAD5HM5AML5CEP5Q5KLC    | ASLLEIAHKY5-----             | -----                   | -----                        |
| AtEST   | DKAIP5CD5FIR5W5MIDN5FN5VK   | VYEID5G5D5HM5V5ML5SKP5Q5L5F   | DSLSA5IAT5DY5-----           | -----                   | -----                        |
| MeHNL   | DKVFL5PD5FQ5RW5QIAN5YK5PKD  | AYQVQ5G5D5HK5LQ5LTK5TEEVA     | HILQ5EVAD5AYA-----           | -----                   | -----                        |
| HbHNL   | DEIFL5PE5FQ5LQ5IEN5YK5PKD   | VYK5VE5G5D5HK5LQ5LTK5KEIA     | EILQ5EVAD5TY5N-----          | -----                   | -----                        |
| HNL1-ML | DKIFTE5EFQ5RW5QIDN5YK5PKD   | VYV5V5P5G5D5HK5L5ML5SK5V5NELF | QIILQ5EVAD5TYAN5LLAV5GG5H    | HH5HH5*-                | -----                        |
| HNL1-NJ | DKIFL5EE5FQ5RW5QIN5YK5PKD   | VYEV5P5G5D5HK5L5ML5SK5V5NELF  | QIILQ5EVAD5TYAS5LLAV5GG5G    | HH5HH5H5*               | -----                        |
| HNL1    | DKIFP5PE5FQ5LQ5IEN5YK5PKD   | VYRVQ5G5D5HK5LQ5L5SK5TN5ELA   | EILQ5EVAD5TYAD5LLAV5GG5G     | HH5HH5H5-               | -----                        |
| EST3-ML | DKVIP5EE5FQ5RW5MIDN5FN5VK   | VYEIQ5G5D5HM5L5ML5SK5P5Q5ELF  | DSLQ5E5IAD5NYAG5GG5HH5HH5H   | *-----                  | -----                        |
| EST3-NJ | DKAIP5EE5FQ5RW5MIDN5F5V5DK  | VYEIQ5G5D5HM5L5ML5SK5P5Q5ELF  | DCLQ5E5IAD5KYAS5LTS5VAG5G    | HH5HH5H5*               | -----                        |
| EST3    | DKA5FP5PE5FQ5LQ5IEN5Y5NP5K  | VYEVK5G5D5HK5VQ5L5SK5T5Q5ELA  | DILQ5EVAD5NYAD5LLD5VL5GG5G   | HH5HH5H5-               | -----                        |
| EST1    | DKAIP5EE5FQ5RW5MIEN5SG5V5NK | VMEIK5G5AD5H5MP5FSK5P5Q5ELC   | QC5LLE5IANK5YAK5AG5D5PL5GG5G | HH5HH5H5H               | -----                        |
| EST2    | DKAIP5EE5FQ5RW5MIEN5SG5V5NE | VMEIK5G5AD5H5MP5FSK5P5Q5ELC   | QC5LLE5IANK5YAK5AG5D5PL5GG5G | HH5HH5H5-               | -----                        |

**Figure S2.** Alignment of the amino acid sequences of selected modern  $\alpha/\beta$ -hydrolases and reconstructed ancestral enzymes. Yellow highlights the conserved catalytic triad, while blue highlights the additional residues needed to interconvert hydroxynitrile lyase and esterase activity.<sup>2,3</sup> Alignment made using the Clustal Omega algorithm within SeaView 4.4.0 (<http://doua.prabi.fr/software/seaview>). Abbreviations: RcEST: Polyneuridine-aldehyde esterase precursor, putative from *Ricinus communis* NCBI Reference Sequence: XP\_002510769.1; MKS1: methylketone synthase I from *Lycopersicon hirsutum f. glabratum* GenBank: ADK38535.1; RsEST: Polyneuridine-aldehyde esterase from *Rauvolfia serpentina* UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot: Q9SE93.1; SABP2: Salicylic acid-binding protein 2 from *Nicotiana tabacum* UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot: Q6RYA0.1; AtEST: EST5 from *Arabidopsis thaliana* (shows R-selective cleavage of mandelonitrile) NCBI Reference Sequence: NP\_196592.1; MeHNL: S hydroxynitrile lyase from *Manihot esculenta* GenBank: AAV52632.1; HbHNL: S hydroxynitrile lyase

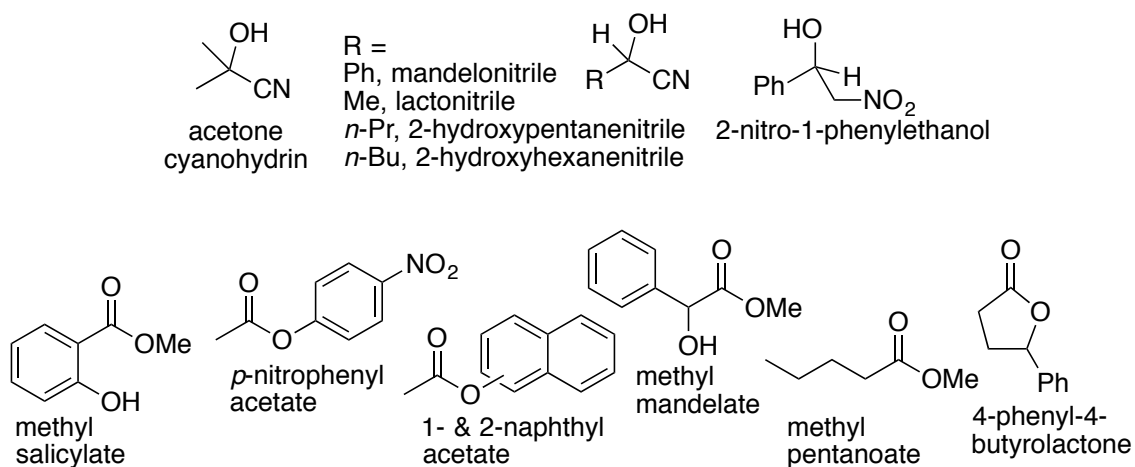
from *Hevea brasiliensis* UniProtKB/Swiss-Prot: P52704.1

**Table S1.** Pairwise amino acid sequence identities of modern and ancestral enzymes.

|         | SABP 2 | Rs-EST | RcEst | EST2 | EST1 | EST3-NJ | EST3-ML | EST3 | HNL1-NJ | HNL1-ML | HNL1 | AtEST | MeHNL |
|---------|--------|--------|-------|------|------|---------|---------|------|---------|---------|------|-------|-------|
| HbHNL   | 44     | 41     | 21    | 48   | 49   | 56      | 58      | 67   | 79      | 75      | 79   | 47    | 76    |
| MeHNL   | 41     | 39     | 21    | 44   | 45   | 53      | 54      | 63   | 67      | 67      | 74   | 45    |       |
| AtEST   | 50     | 46     | 24    | 58   | 60   | 73      | 78      | 66   | 59      | 57      | 55   |       |       |
| HNL1    | 49     | 48     | 23    | 57   | 59   | 68      | 69      | 84   | 84      | 84      |      |       |       |
| HNL1-ML | 51     | 46     | 24    | 56   | 58   | 71      | 71      | 74   | 91      |         |      |       |       |
| HNL1-NJ | 50     | 49     | 25    | 58   | 59   | 77      | 71      | 75   |         |         |      |       |       |
| EST3    | 55     | 52     | 26    | 66   | 69   | 73      | 76      |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| EST3-ML | 60     | 54     | 27    | 69   | 71   | 85      |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| EST3-NJ | 59     | 56     | 29    | 72   | 73   |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| EST1    | 70     | 64     | 29    | 96   |      |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| EST2    | 71     | 62     | 29    |      |      |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| RcEst   | 28     | 27     |       |      |      |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| RsEst   | 56     |        |       |      |      |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |
| SABP2   |        |        |       |      |      |         |         |      |         |         |      |       |       |

“Background color emphasizes the amino acid sequence similarities ranging from 29% (red) to 96% (green).

**Table S2.** Cyanohydrin cleavage and ester hydrolysis catalyzed by modern and ancestral enzymes.<sup>a</sup>



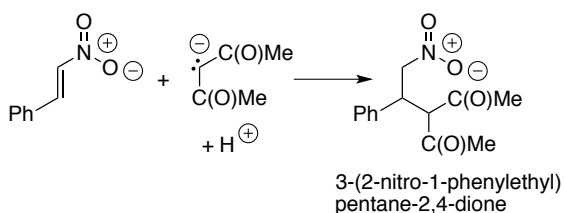
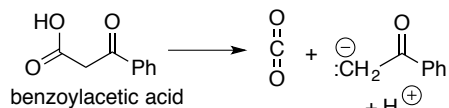
| Enzyme           | rate of cyanohydrin cleavage, min <sup>-1</sup> |  |              |                        |                          |   | rate of ester hydrolysis, min <sup>-1</sup> |                    |                    |                  |                   |                                    |
|------------------|---|--|--------------|------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------------------------|
|                  | acetone cyanohydrin                             | mandelonitrile                                 | lactonitrile | 2-OH pentanenitrile    | 2-OH hexanenitrile       | 2-nitro-1-phenylethanol <sup>c</sup>      | methyl salicylate                           | 1-naphthyl acetate | 2-naphthyl acetate | methyl mandelate | methyl pentanoate | 4-phenyl-4-butyrolactone           |
| <i>HbHN</i><br>L | 2400 ± 100 <sup>b</sup>                         | 1530 ± 130 <sup>e b</sup><br>(>199, <i>S</i> ) | 50 ± 11      | 7.2 ± 0.8 <sup>b</sup> | 24 ± 2 <sup>b</sup>      | 7.2 <sup>f</sup> ± 0.3<br>(49, <i>S</i> ) | 0.066 ± 0.006                               | <0.008             | <0.008             | <0.02            | <0.44             | <0.0001                            |
| <i>MeHN</i><br>L | 12600 ± 800                                     | 1340 ± 20 <sup>b</sup><br>(>49, <i>S</i> )     | 13 ± 1       | 0.66 ± 0.06            | 1.1 ± 0.1                | 0.3<br>(1.1, <i>S</i> )                   | <0.09                                       | <0.4               | <0.4               | <0.09            | <0.44             | <0.0001                            |
| <i>HNL1-ML</i>   | 720 ± 60  | 170 ± 20<br>(4, <i>S</i> )                     | 7.2 ± 0.6    | 0.14 ± 0.01            | 0.17 ± 0.02              | 3.4 ± 0.4<br>(5.6, <i>S</i> )             | 0.66 ± 0.08                                 | 0.054 ± 0.005      | 0.13 ± 0.01        | <0.1             | 0.45 ± 0.04       | <0.0001                            |
| <i>HNL1-NJ</i>   | 350 ± 10  | 60 ± 5<br>(32, <i>S</i> )                      | 6.4 ± 0.7    | 0.011 ± 0.001          | 0.013 ± 0.001            | 9.6 ± 0.6<br>(32, <i>S</i> )              | 0.030 ± 0.004                               | 0.0090 ± 0.0001    | 0.0054 ± 0.0007    | <0.006           | 1.0 ± 0.1         | 0.0007 ± 0.0003<br>(14, <i>S</i> ) |
| <i>HNL1</i>      | 880 ± 70 <sup>b</sup>                           | 340 ± 10 <sup>b</sup><br>(49, <i>S</i> )       | 5.0 ± 0.2    | 0.5 ± 0.1 <sup>b</sup> | 0.42 ± 0.09 <sup>b</sup> | 14 ± 1<br>(32, <i>S</i> )                 | 0.048 ± 0.006                               | 0.016 ± 0.002      | 0.024 ± 0.003      | <0.006           | <0.44             | <0.0001                            |
| <i>EST3-ML</i>   | 0.078 ± 0.006                                   | 36 ± 9<br>(6.7, <i>R</i> )                     | <1.2         | <0.06                  | <0.06                    | <0.5                                      | <0.006                                      | 0.0036 ± 0.0004    | 0.0084 ± 0.0009    | <0.006           | <0.44             | <0.0001                            |

|           |       |  |       |       |                 |                   |                            |                 |                       |                              |               |   |
|-----------|-------|--|-------|-------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------|---|
| EST3-NJ   | <0.06 | <0.5                                     | <1.2  | <0.06 | <0.06           | <0.5              | 0.13<br>±0.01              | 0.28±0<br>.04   | 0.46<br>±0.04         | 0.11±0<br>.01<br>(1.0)       | 46 ± 4        | 0.0002<br>2<br>±0.000<br>11<br>(15, R)    |
| EST3      | <0.06 | <0.5                                     | <1.2  | <0.06 | <0.06           | <0.5              | <0.012                     | <0.06           | 0.0024<br>±0.000<br>2 | <0.006                       | 0.66<br>±0.05 | <0.000<br>1                               |
| EST2      | <0.06 | 0.70<br>±0.09<br>(2.1, S)                | <1.2  | <0.06 | 0.21<br>±0.03   | <0.5              | 14 ±1                      | 0.084<br>±0.006 | 1.5±0.<br>1           | 1.5<br>±0.1<br>(1.3, S)      | 340<br>±20    | 0.0002<br>5<br>±0.000<br>07<br>(55, R)    |
| EST1      | <0.06 | 6.5<br>±0.9<br>(2.3, S)                  | <1.2  | <0.06 | 0.034±<br>0.006 | <0.5              | 26 ±3                      | 0.096<br>±0.008 | 2.2±0.<br>2           | 0.45<br>±0.05<br>(1.0)       | 140<br>±10    | 0.0003<br>8<br>±0.000<br>1<br>(38, R)     |
| SABP<br>2 | <0.06 | <0.5                                     | <1.2  | <0.06 | <0.06           | <0.5              | 0.52<br>±0.05 <sup>c</sup> | 0.012±<br>0.007 | 0.018±<br>0.002       | 2.8<br>±0.3<br>(1.0)         | 198 ±2        | 0.0007<br>7<br>±0.000<br>1<br>(1.0)       |
| RcEST     | <0.06 | <0.5                                     | <0.18 | <0.4  | <0.4            | <0.5              | 7.5<br>±0.6                | 0.12±0<br>.01   | 0.18±0<br>.02         | 0.013<br>±0.001<br>(1.0)     | 2.8<br>±0.2   | <0.000<br>1                               |
| RsEST     | <0.06 | <0.5                                     | <0.18 | <0.1  | <0.1            | <0.5              | 0.042<br>±0.004            | 0.042<br>±0.003 | 0.012<br>±0.002       | 0.12<br>±0.01<br>(1.2,<br>R) | 7.1±0.<br>6   | 0.0006<br>6±0.00<br>007<br>(13, S)        |
| AtEST     | <0.06 | 2530<br>±70 <sup>b</sup><br>(>199,<br>R) | <1.2  | <0.06 | <0.06           | 4.6 ±3<br>(13, R) | <0.02                      | 1.7<br>±0.2     | 0.038±<br>0.004       | <0.006                       | 0.72<br>±0.06 | 0.0005<br>4<br>±0.000<br>3<br>(8.3,<br>R) |

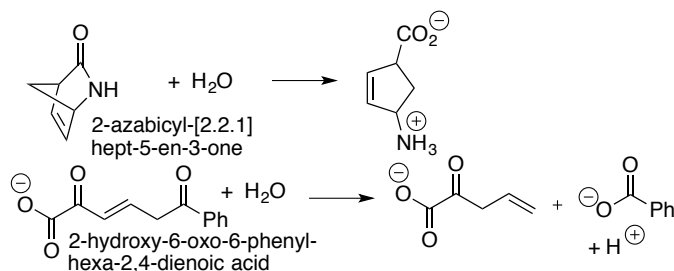
<sup>a</sup> Error limits are standard deviations from three measurements. Rates (min<sup>-1</sup>) correspond to hydrolysis or cleavage of the substrate shown determined at the concentration given in the experimental section. Enantioselectivity and favored enantiomer are in parentheses. <sup>b</sup> Rate refers to formation of the substrate shown. <sup>c</sup> Measured rate at 0.5 mM methyl salicylate. The product, salicylic acid inhibits SABP2 (K<sub>d</sub> = 90 nM<sup>2</sup>). Other researchers measured a faster rate of 27 min<sup>-1</sup> when product inhibition does not slow the reaction.

**Table S3.** Rates and enantioselectivity of other nucleophilic additions and other hydrolyses catalyzed by modern and ancestral hydroxynitrile lyases and esterases.<sup>a</sup>

other eliminations



other hydrolyses



| Enzymes      | Decarboxylase<br>Benzoylacetic<br>acid | Michael Addition<br>3-(2-Nitro-1-phenyl<br>ethyl)pentane-2,4-dione <sup>d</sup> | Lactamase<br>2-Azabicyclo-[2.2.1]hept-5-<br>en-3-one | C-C hydrolase<br>2-hydroxy-6-<br>oxo-6-<br>phenylhexa-2, 4-<br>dienoic acid |
|--------------|--|---|--|---|
| <i>HbHNL</i> | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | <0.006  |
| <i>MeHNL</i> | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | <0.08   |
| HNL1-ML      | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | <0.2  |
| HNL1-NJ      | 0.015 ± 0.0008                         | 0.0002 ± 0.0001<br>(3.4, <i>S</i> )   | <0.0001  | 0.00051 ±<br>0.00005  |
| HNL1         | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | <0.001  |
| EST3-ML      | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | 0.0012 ± 0.0002   |
| EST3-NJ      | <0.0005                                | 0.00015 ± 0.00006<br>(1.1, <i>R</i> )   | 0.0041 ± 0.00005<br>(66, 1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )   | 0.0056 ± 0.0005   |
| EST3         | <0.0002                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | 0.031 ± 0.003   |
| EST2         | 0.0026 ± 0.0003                        | <0.0001   | 0.0018 ± 0.0001<br>(9.8, 1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )   | <0.08   |
| EST1         | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | 0.021 ± 0.002<br>(82, 1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )      | <0.005  |
| SABP2        | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | 0.0027 ± 0.0012<br>(40, 1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )    | <0.002  |
| <i>RcEST</i> | <0.001                                 | <0.001  | <0.0005  | <0.006  |
| <i>RsEST</i> | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0005  | 0.00035 ±<br>0.00003  |
| <i>AtEST</i> | <0.0001                                | <0.0001   | <0.0001  | <0.003  |

<sup>a</sup> Error limits are standard deviations from three measurements. Rates ( $\text{min}^{-1}$ ) correspond to hydrolysis or cleavage of the substrate shown determined at the concentration given in the experimental section. Enantioselectivity and favored enantiomer are in parentheses. Red fill marks instances where no reaction was detected; the detection limits vary depending on the substrate and amount of enzyme available. <sup>b</sup> Rates are  $k_{\text{cat}}$  ( $\text{min}^{-1}$ ) determined by steady state kinetics. <sup>c</sup> Enantioselectivity was measured by formation of the substrate shown. <sup>d</sup> Rate refers to formation of the substrate shown.

**Table S4.** Data (conversion and enantiomeric excess) to measure the enantioselectivity of modern and ancestral enzymes.<sup>a</sup>

| Enzymes       | Hydroxynitrile lyase<br>Mandelonitrile | Henry Reaction<br>2-Nitro-1-phenylethanol | Michael addition<br>3-(2-Nitro-1-phenylethyl)pentane-2,4-dione | Lactamase<br>2-Azabicyclo-[2.2.1]hept-5-en-3-one | Lactonase<br>5-phenyldihydrofuran-2(3H)-one | Esterase<br>Methyl mandelate |
|---------------|--|---|--|--|---|------------------------------|
| <i>HbHNL</i>  | 10, 99 ( <i>S</i> )                    | 63, 92 ( <i>S</i> ) <sup>b</sup>          | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| <i>MeHNL</i>  | 45, 96 ( <i>S</i> )                    | 76, 5 ( <i>S</i> )                        | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| HNL1-ML       | 55, 60 ( <i>S</i> )                    | 85, 83 ( <i>S</i> )                       | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| HNL 1-NJ      | 72, 95 ( <i>S</i> )                    | 98, 95 ( <i>S</i> )                       | 19, 56 ( <i>S</i> )  | <0.1   | 66, 99 ( <i>S</i> )                         | <0.1                         |
| HNL 1         | 52, 95 ( <i>S</i> )                    | 91, 96 ( <i>S</i> )                       | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| EST3-ML       | 18, 77 ( <i>R</i> )                    | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| EST3-NJ       | <0.1                                   | <0.1                                      | 11.6 ( <i>R</i> )  | 47, 78 (1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )                | 21, 30 ( <i>R</i> )                         | 11, <5                       |
| EST3          | <0.1                                   | <0.01                                     | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | <0.1                         |
| EST 2         | 20, 39 ( <i>S</i> )                    | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | 37, 59 (1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )                | 34, 55 ( <i>R</i> )                         | 50, 10 ( <i>S</i> )          |
| EST 1         | 15, 36 ( <i>S</i> )                    | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | 52, 96 (1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )                | 24,34 ( <i>R</i> )                          | 13, <5                       |
| SABP2         | <0.1                                   | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | 51, 92 (1 <i>R</i> , 4 <i>S</i> )                | 39, <5                                      | 10, <5                       |
| <i>Rc</i> EST | <0.1                                   | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | <0.1   | <0.1  | 5, <5                        |
| <i>Rs</i> EST | <0.1                                   | <0.1                                      | <0.1   | <0.1   | 68, 99 ( <i>S</i> )                         | 12, 6 ( <i>R</i> )           |
| <i>At</i> EST | 86, 99 ( <i>R</i> )                    | 96, 88 ( <i>R</i> )                       | <0.1   | <0.1   | 15, 24 ( <i>R</i> )                         | <0.1                         |

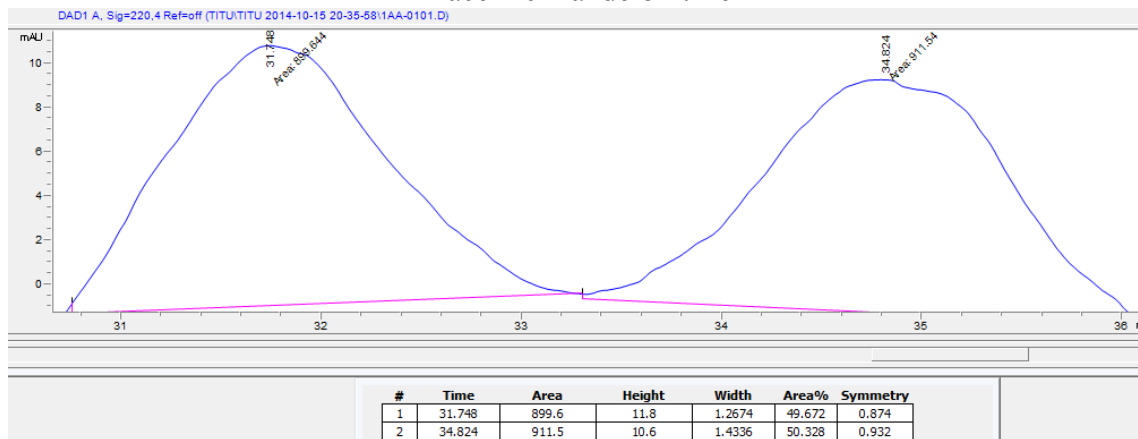
<sup>a</sup> The first number indicates the conversion in % and the second the enantiomeric excess in % of the product indicated for the first three reactions (nucleophilic additions) and of the unreacted substrate indicated for the last three reactions (hydrolyses). (*R*) or (*S*) indicates the configuration of the favored enantiomer. If the measured enantiomeric excess was  $\leq 5\%$  ee, the reaction is considered not enantioselective. <sup>b</sup>From reference 5.



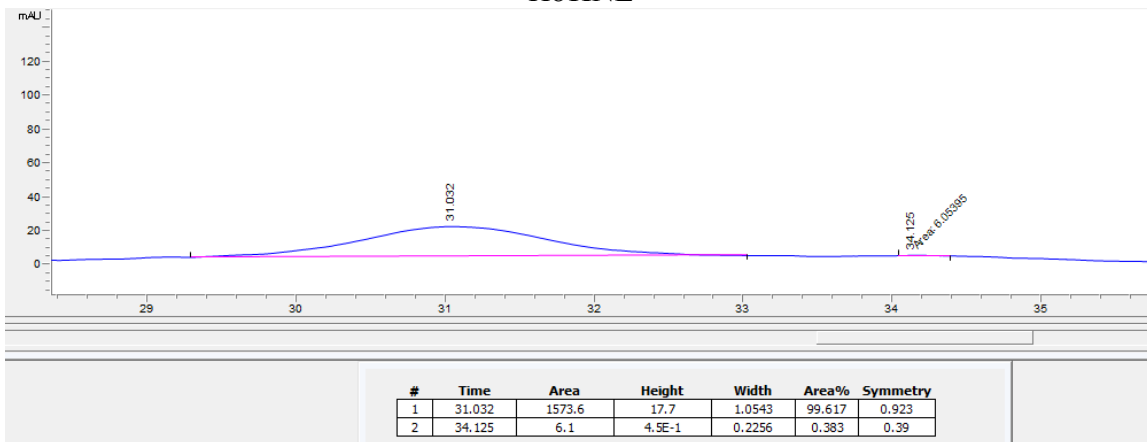
**Figure S3.** Representative HPLC chromatograms to measure enantioselectivity of modern and ancestral enzymes

*A: Formation of mandelonitrile (Chiralcel OD-H, hexane: isopropanol. 98:2)*

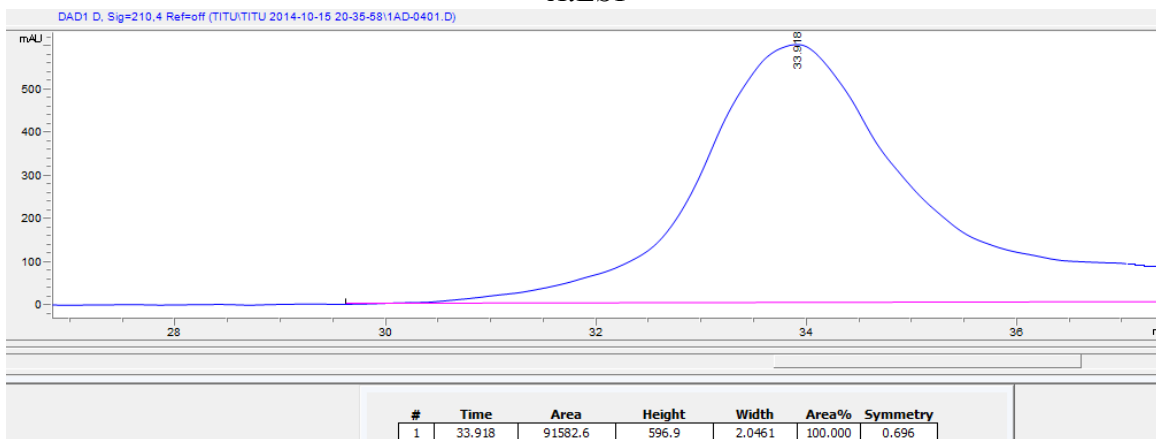
**Racemic mandelonitrile**



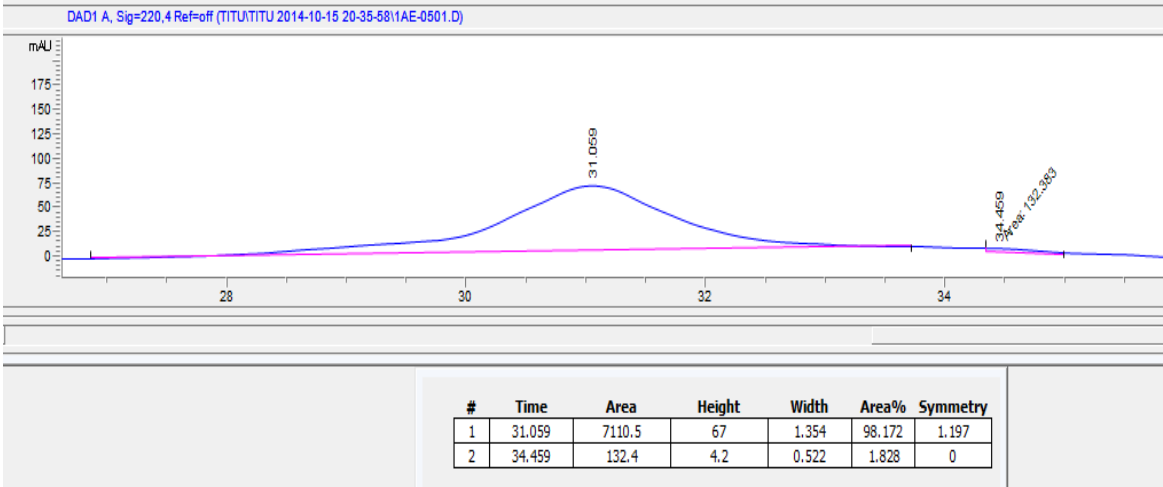
*HbHNL*



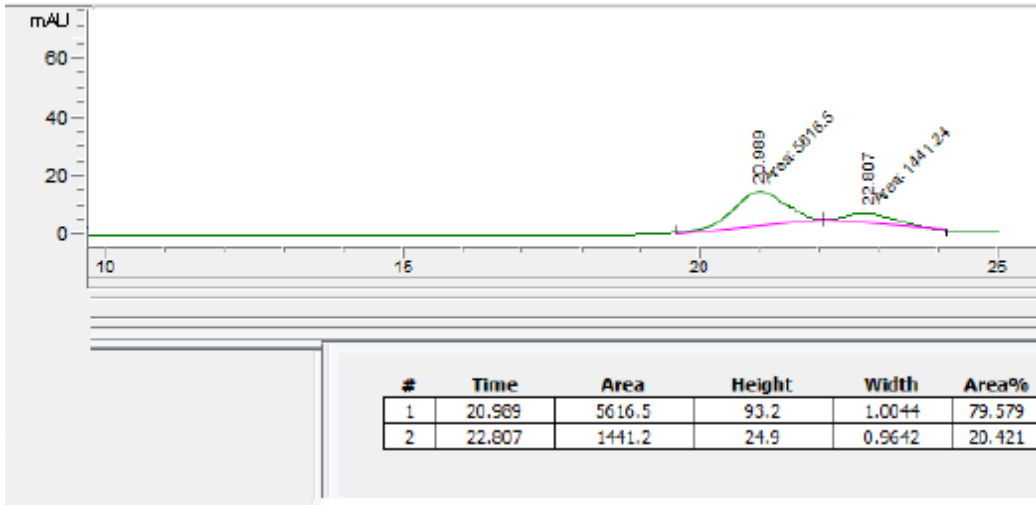
*AtEST*



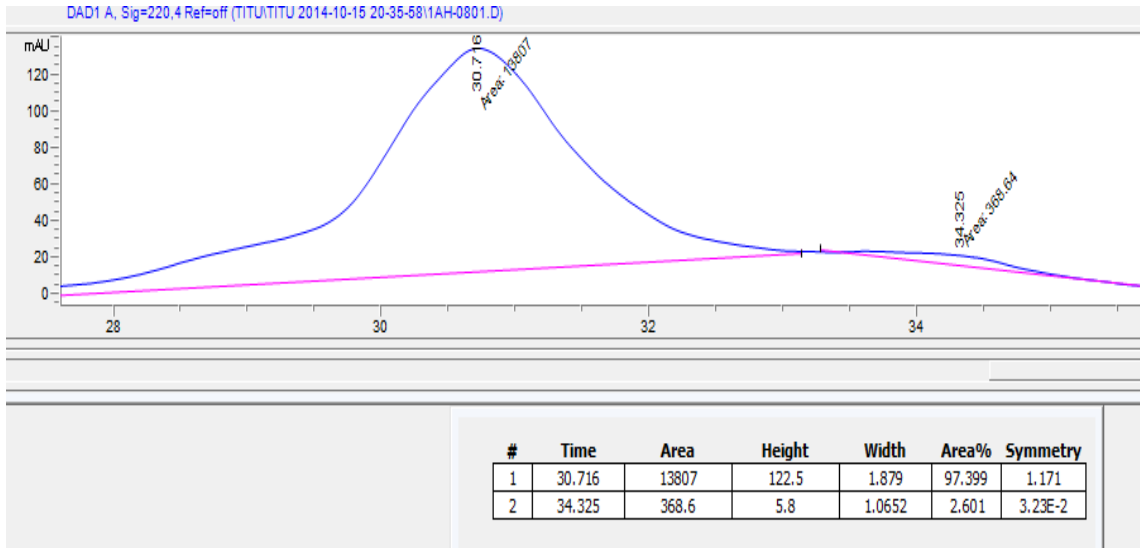
*MeHNL*



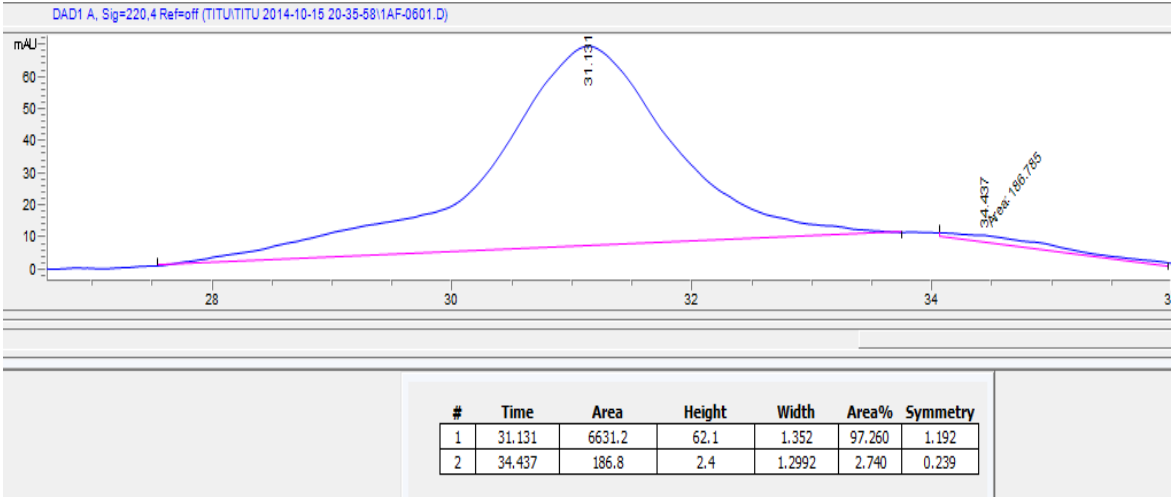
HNL1-ML



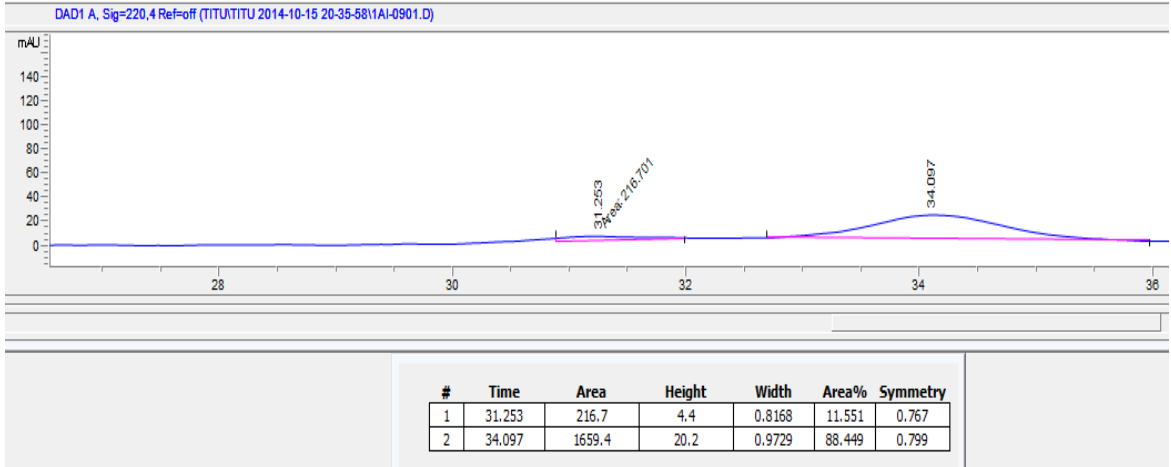
HNL1-NJ



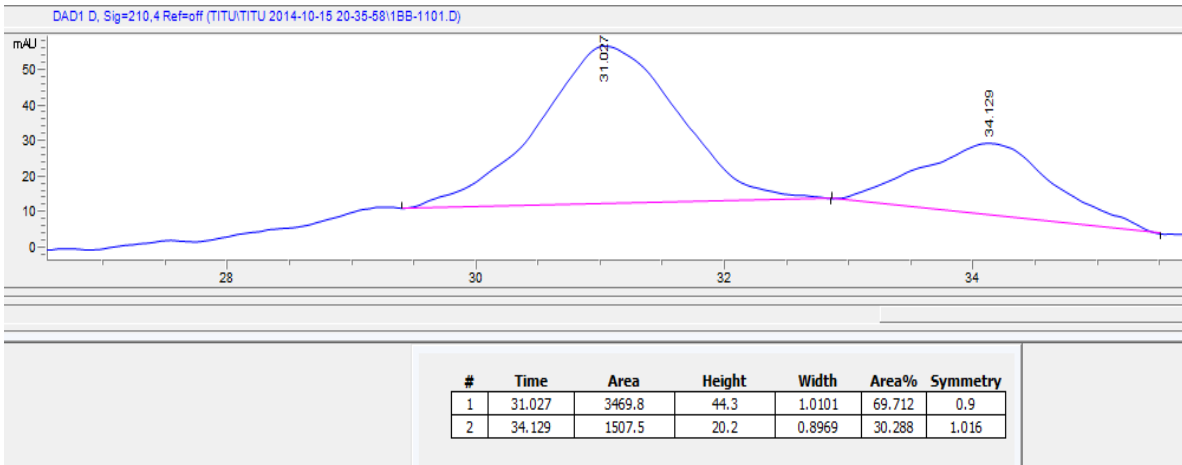
HNL1



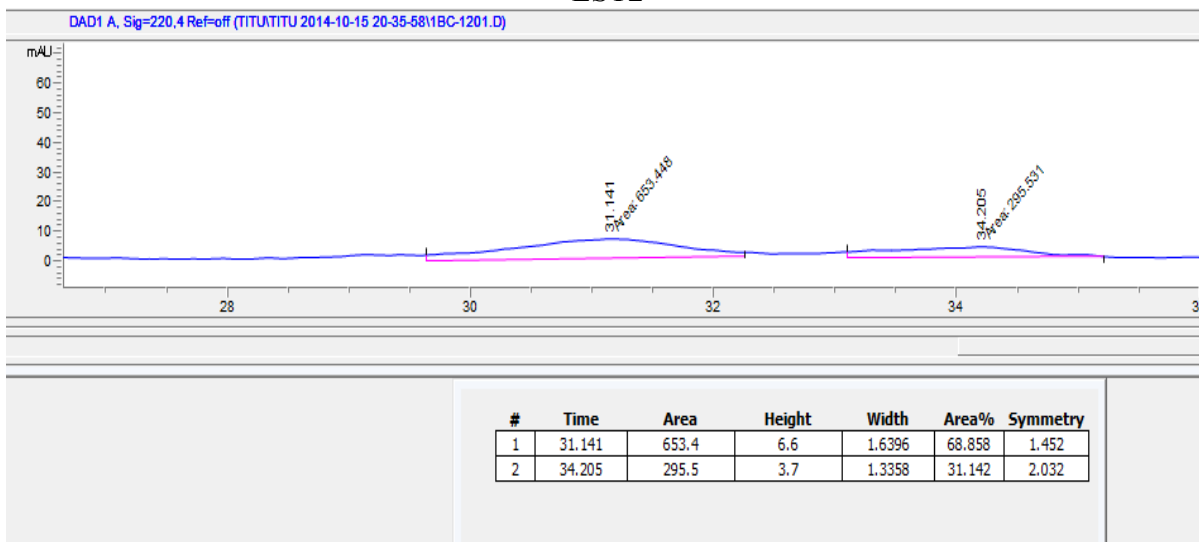
EST3-ML



EST1

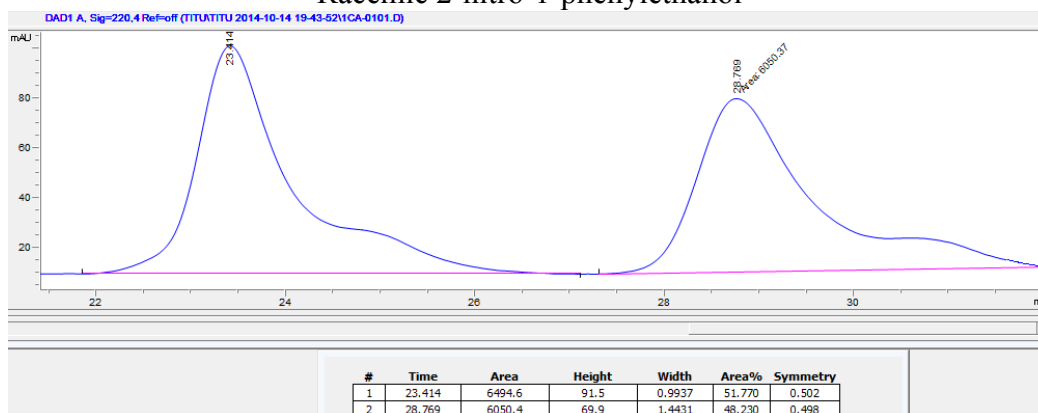


## EST2

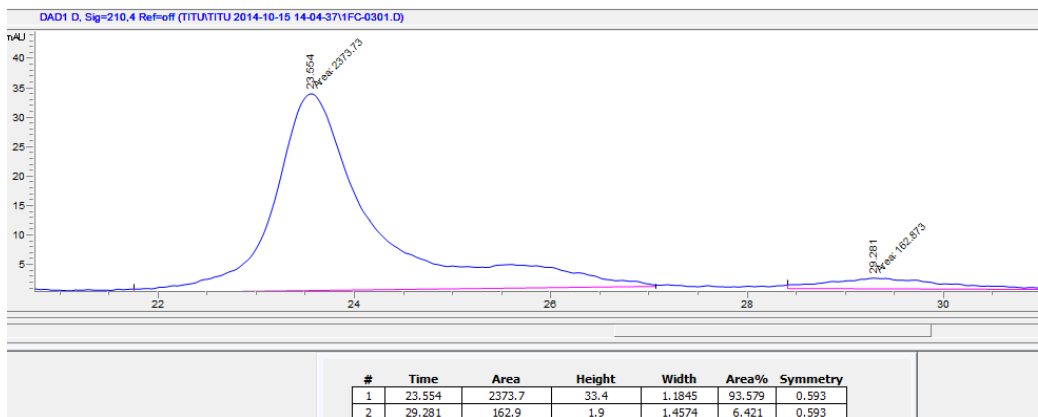


*B: Addition of nitromethane to benzaldehyde (Henry reaction) (Chiralcel OD-H, hexane: isopropanol 95:5)*

### Racemic 2-nitro-1-phenylethanol

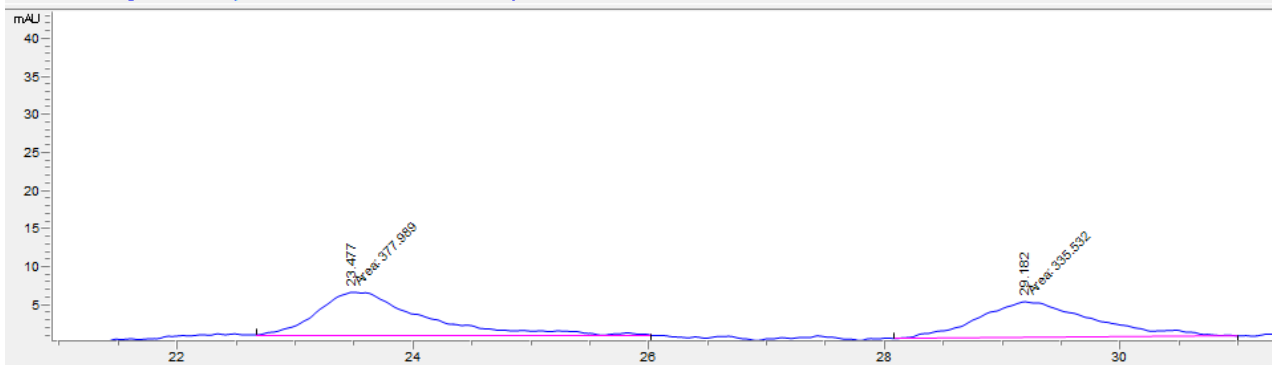


### *AtEST*



# MeHNL

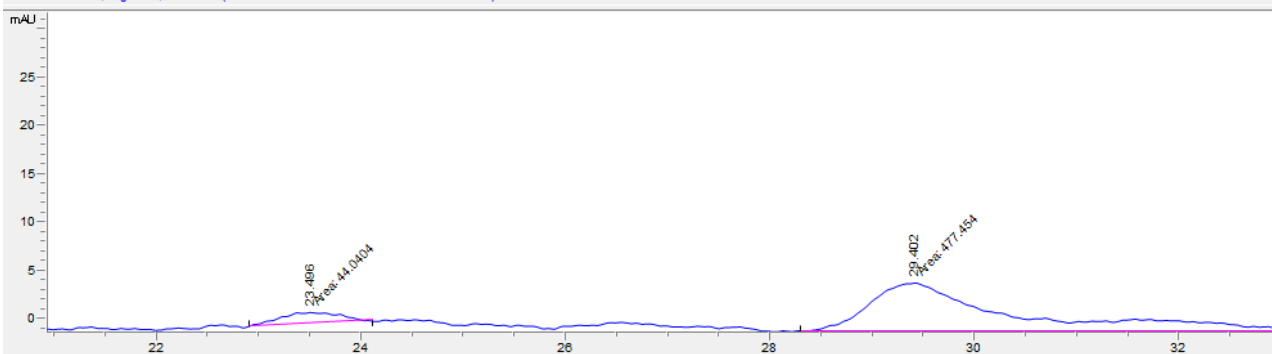
DAD1 D, Sig=210,4 Ref=off (TITUTITU 2014-10-15 14-04-37\1FD-0401.D)



| # | Time   | Area  | Height | Width  | Area%  | Symmetry |
|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 23.477 | 378   | 5.7    | 1.0966 | 52.975 | 0.474    |
| 2 | 29.182 | 335.5 | 4.8    | 1.1705 | 47.025 | 0.681    |

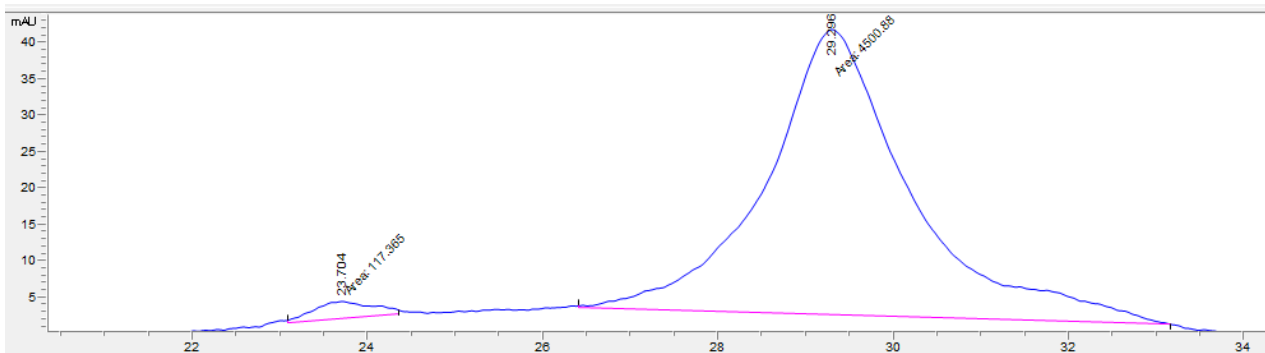
# HNL1-ML

DAD1 D, Sig=210,4 Ref=off (TITUTITU 2014-10-15 14-04-37\1FF-0601.D)



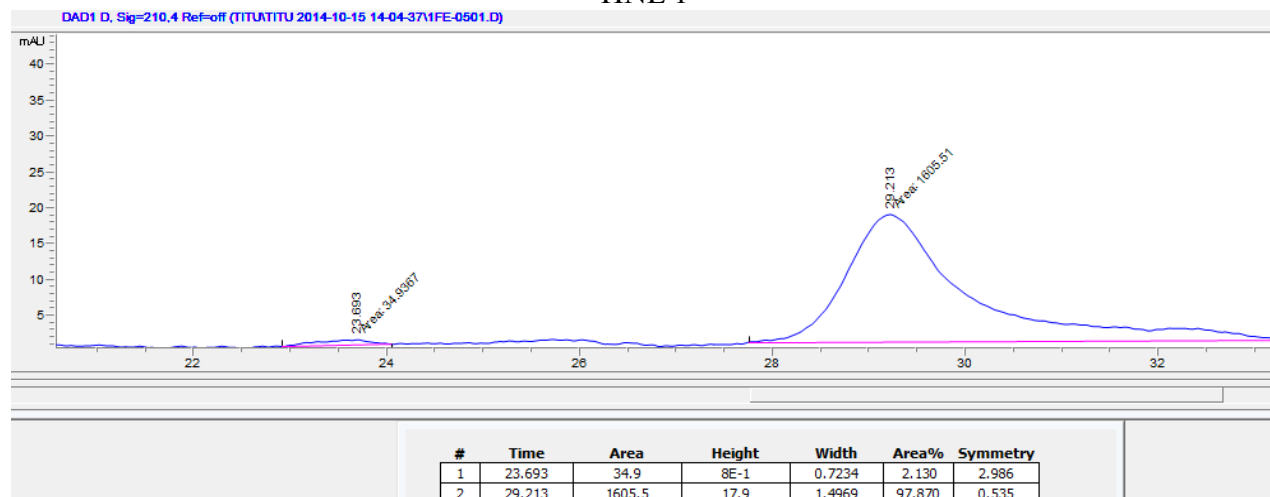
| # | Time   | Area  | Height | Width  | Area%  | Symmetry |
|---|--------|-------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 23.496 | 44    | 1.1    | 0.6678 | 8.445  | 1.14     |
| 2 | 29.402 | 477.5 | 5      | 1.5949 | 91.555 | 0.459    |

# HNL1-NJ



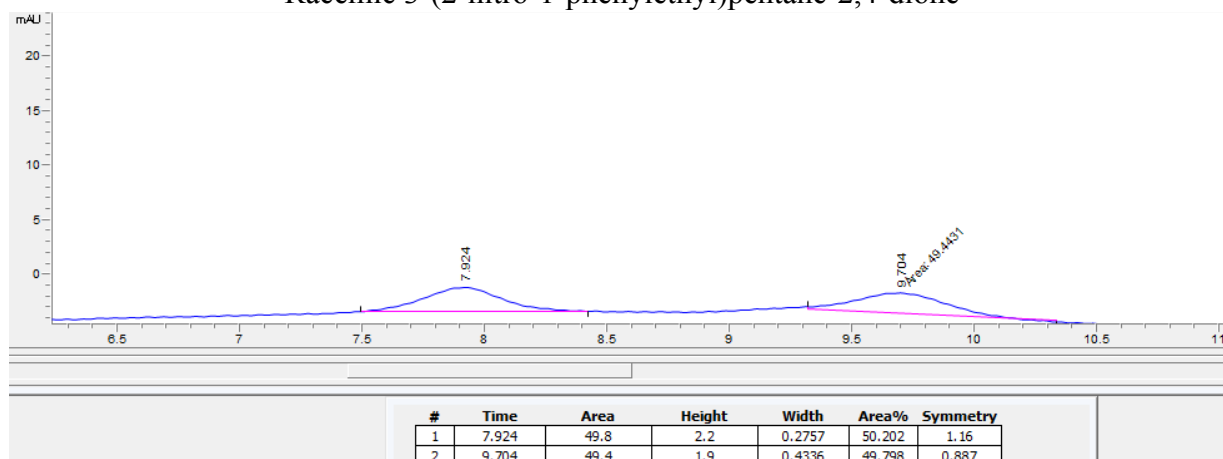
| # | Time   | Area   | Height | Width  | Area%  | Symmetry |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----------|
| 1 | 23.704 | 117.4  | 2.4    | 0.8115 | 2.541  | 0.986    |
| 2 | 29.296 | 4500.9 | 39.3   | 1.9103 | 97.459 | 0.834    |

# HNL 1

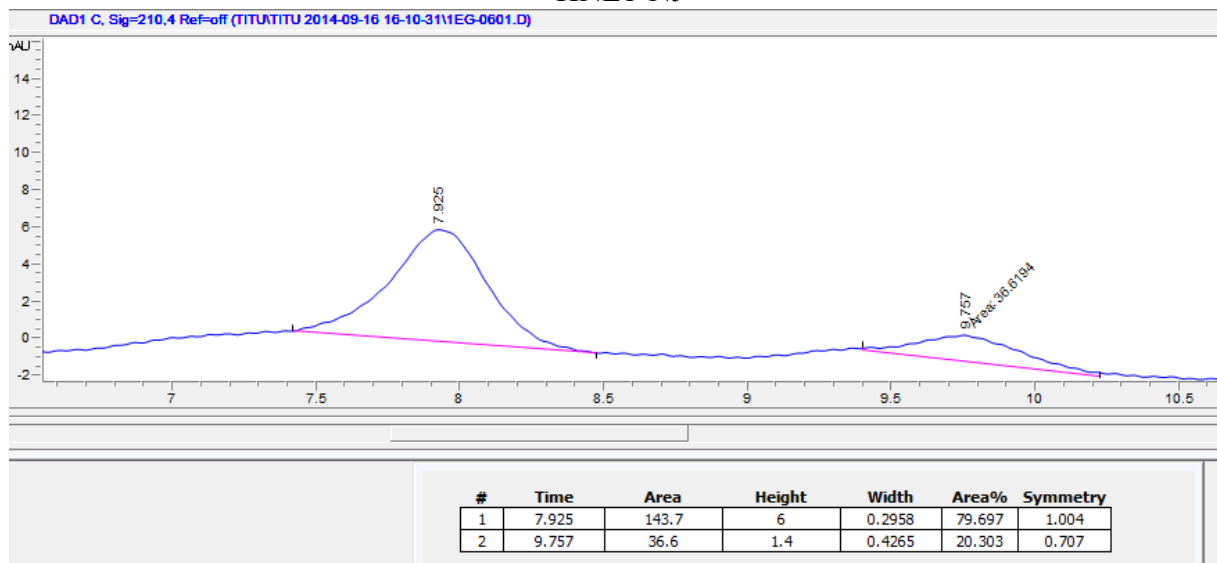


C. Addition of acetyl acetone to *trans*- $\beta$ -nitrostyrene (Michael addition) (Chiralcel OJ-R, acetonitrile: H<sub>2</sub>O, 40:60)

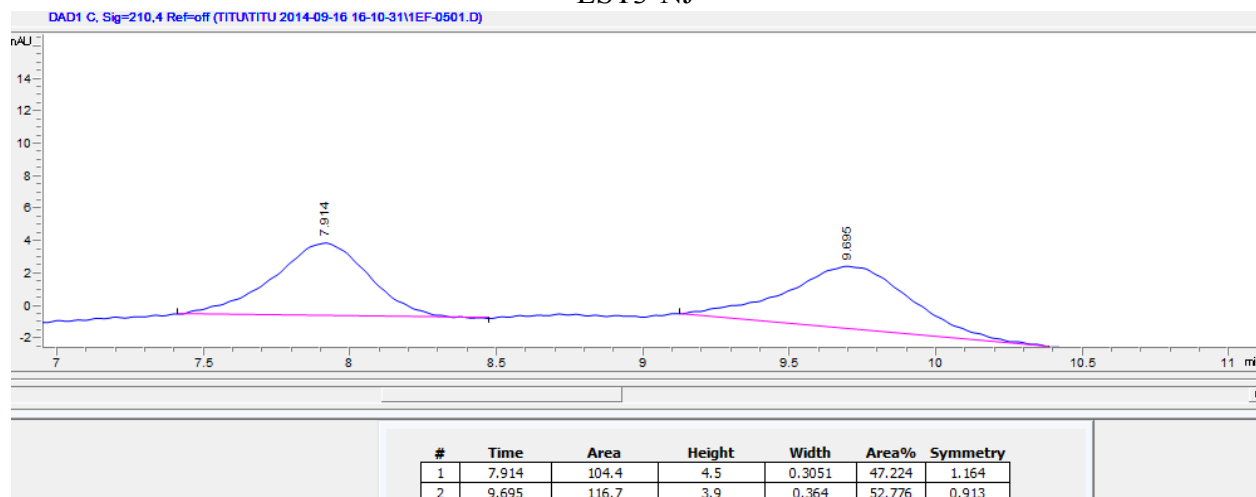
Racemic 3-(2-nitro-1-phenylethyl)pentane-2,4-dione



### HNL1-NJ

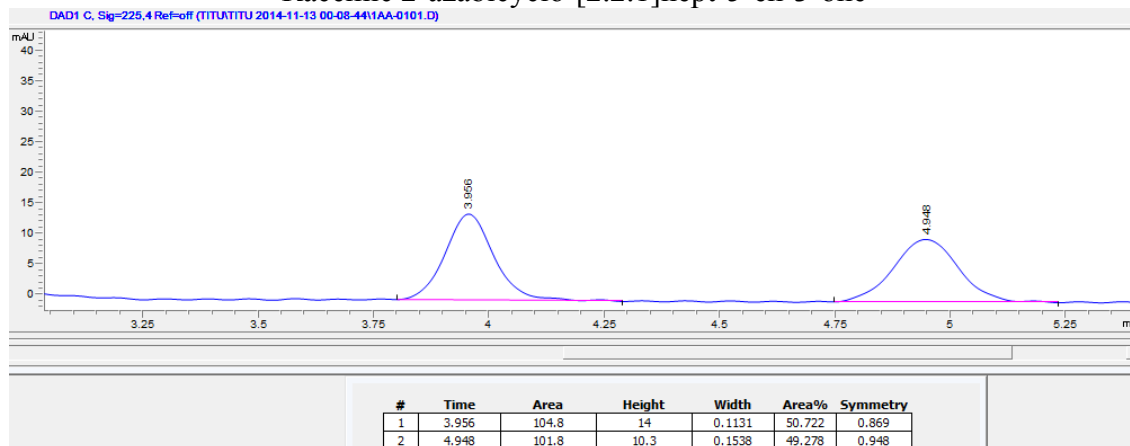


### EST3-NJ

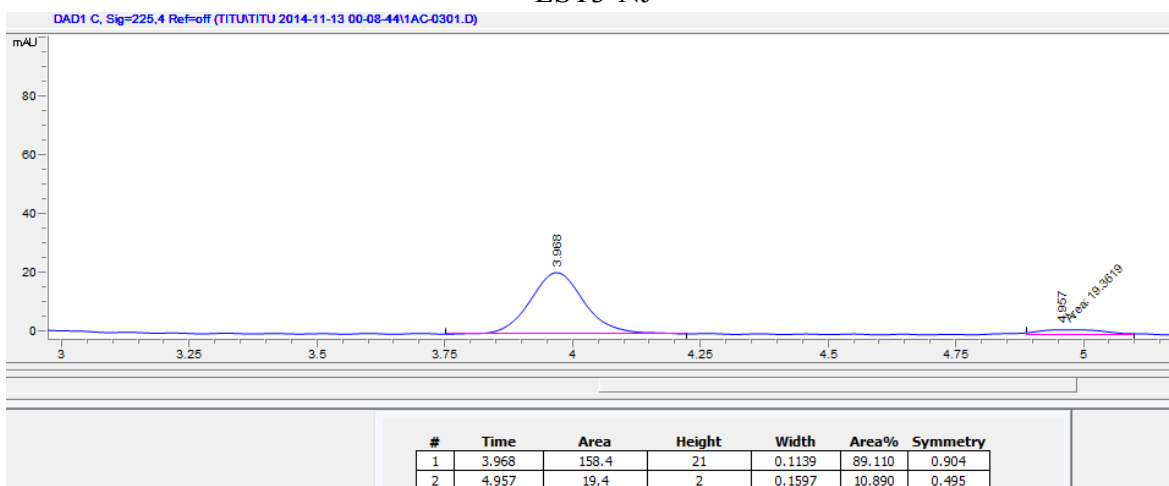


D: Hydrolysis of 2-azabicyclo[2.2.1]hept-5-en-3-one (lactamase) (Chiralcel AS-RH, acetonitrile : H<sub>2</sub>O + 0.1% formic acid, 20:80)

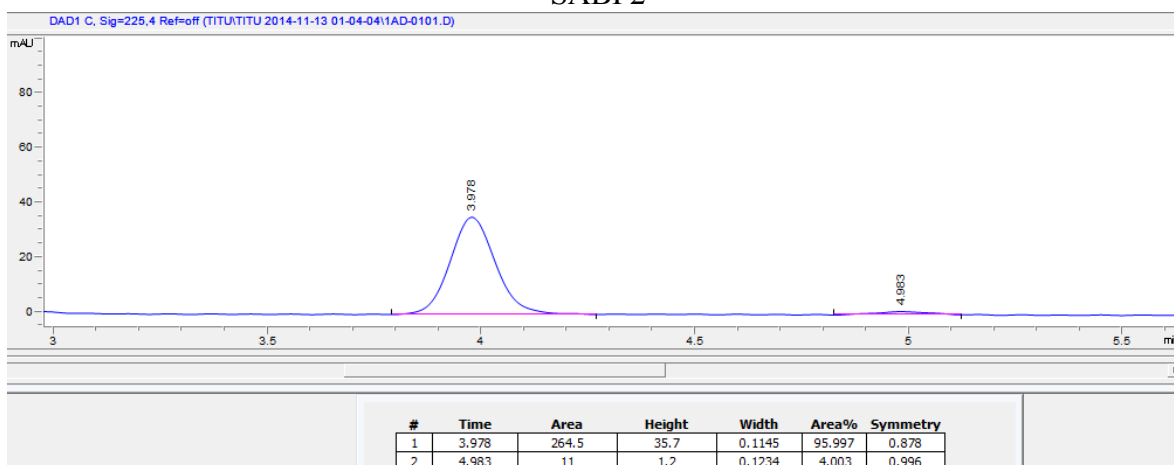
### Racemic 2-azabicyclo-[2.2.1]hept-5-en-3-one



### EST3-NJ

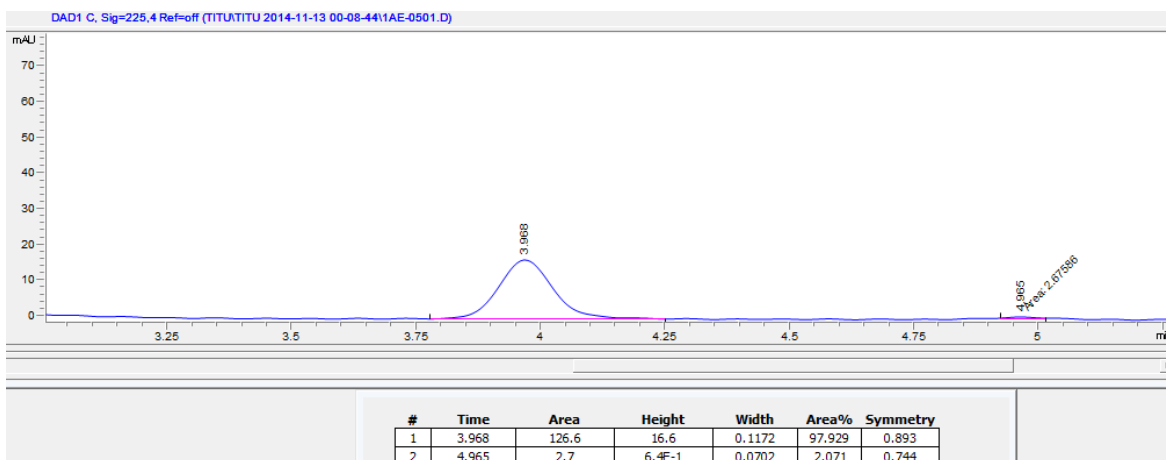


### SABP2

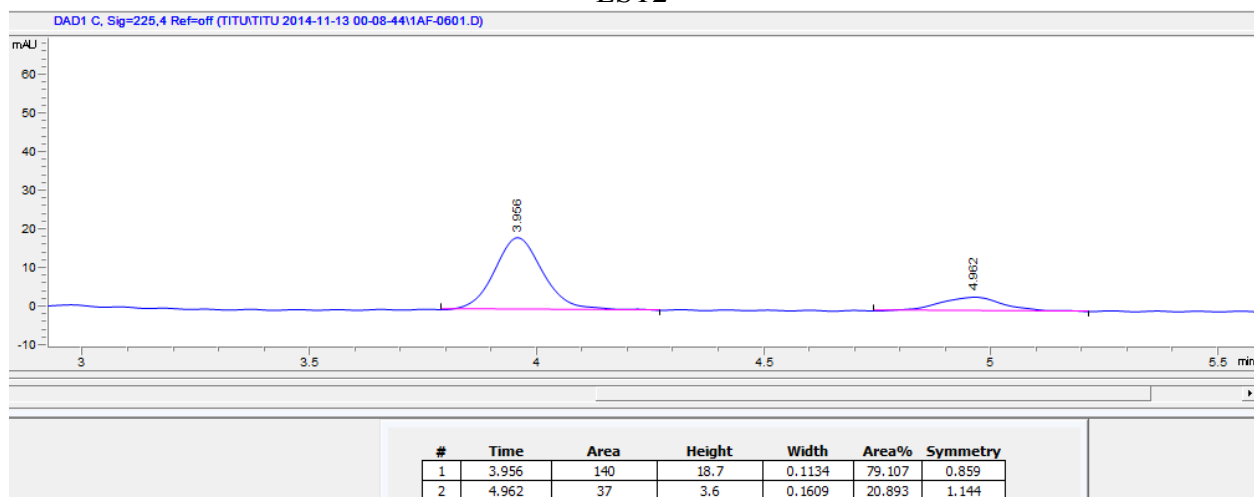


### EST1



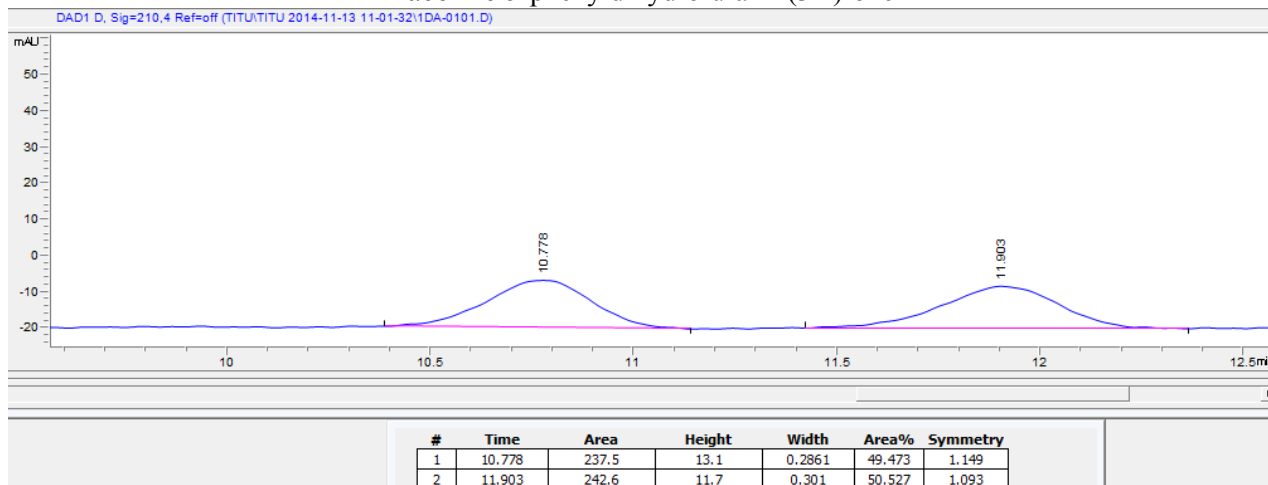


### EST2

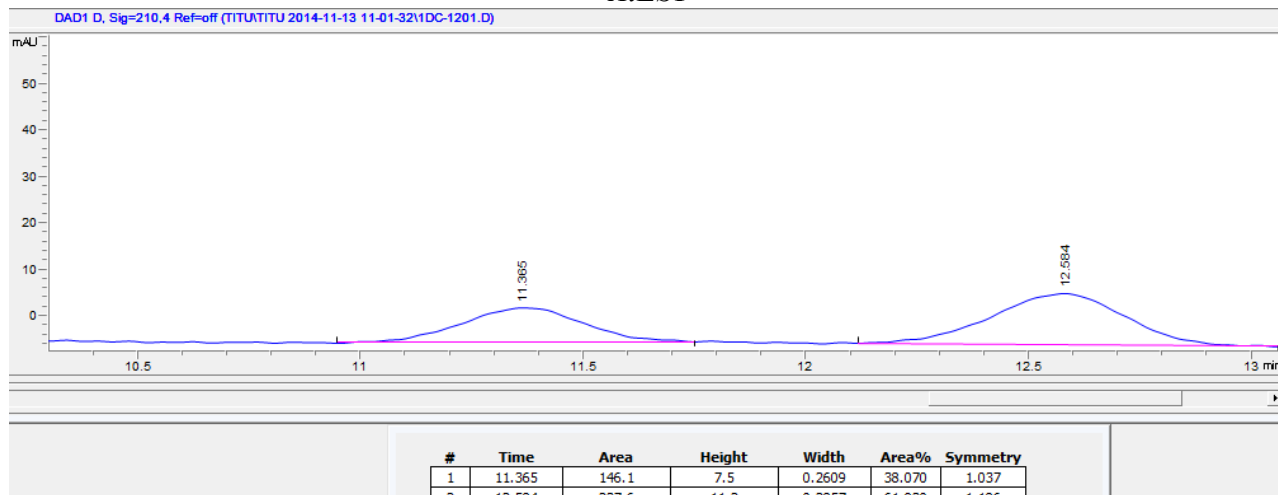


*E. Hydrolysis of 5-phenyldihydrofuran-2(3H)-one (lactonase) (Chiralcel AS-RH, acetonitrile: H<sub>2</sub>O + 0.1% formic acid, 35:65)*

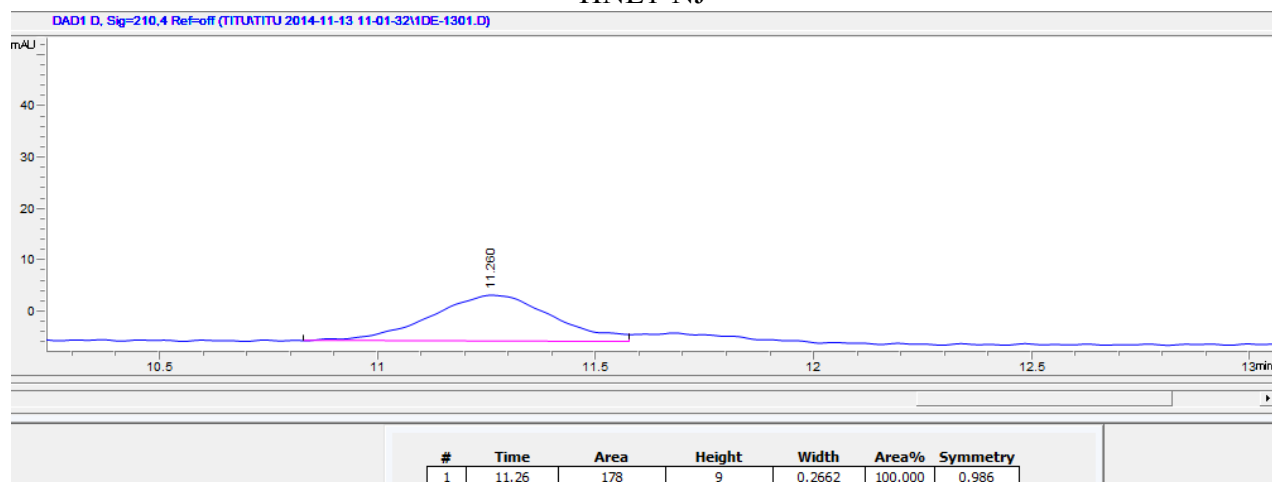
### Racemic 5-phenyldihydrofuran-2(3H)-one



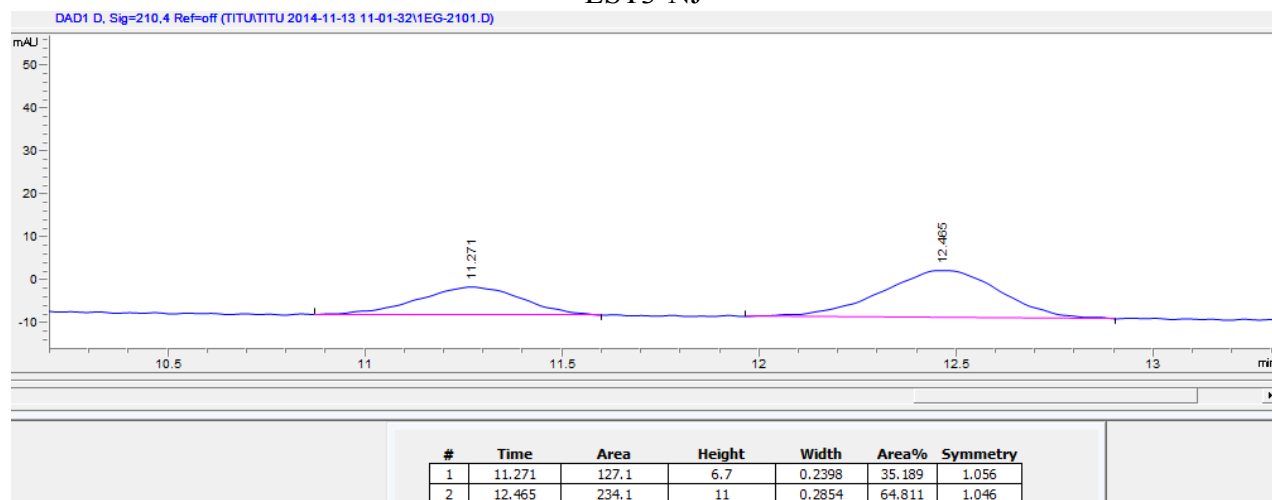
### AtEST



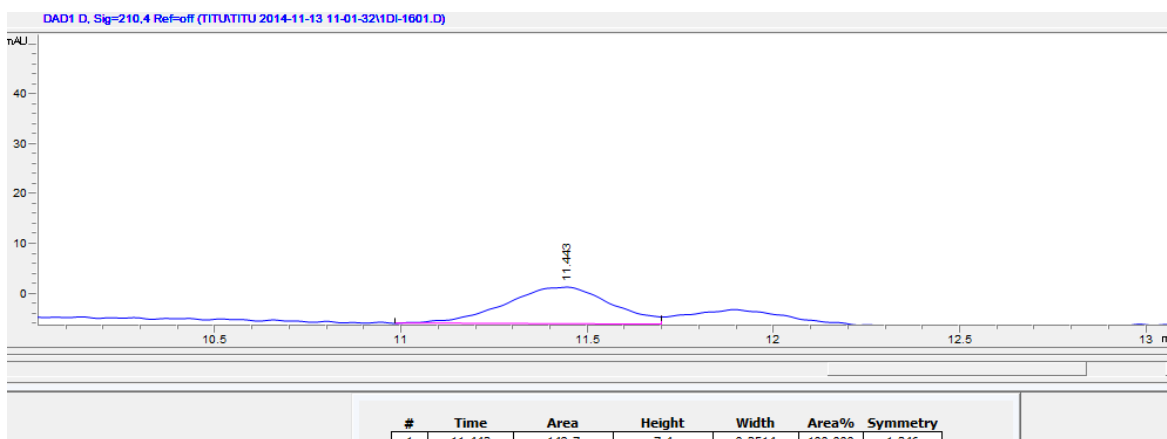
### HNL1-NJ



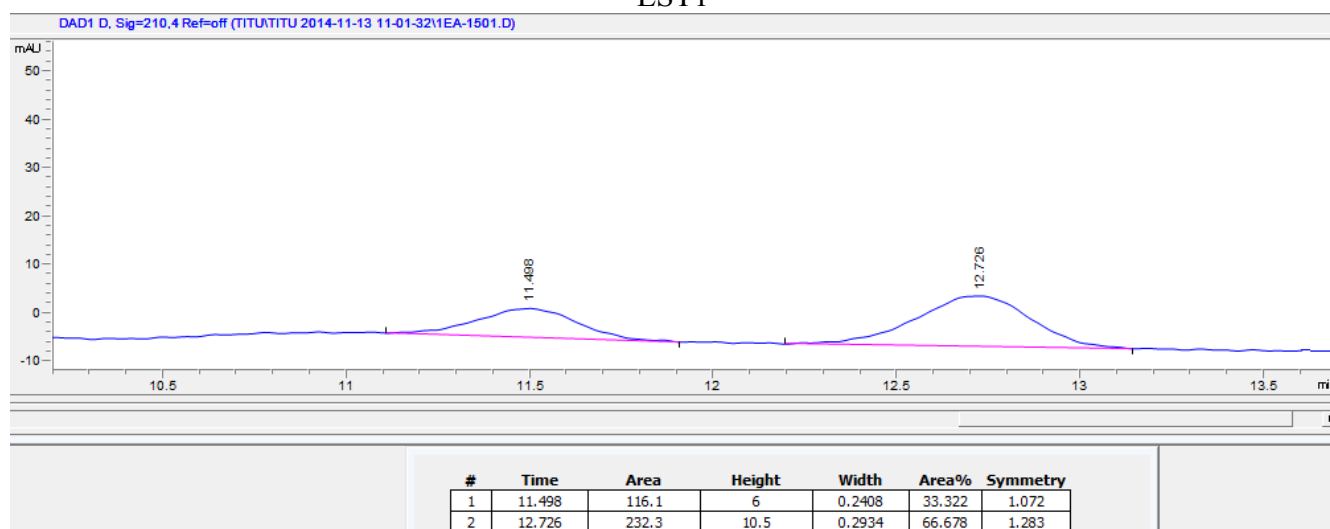
### EST3-NJ



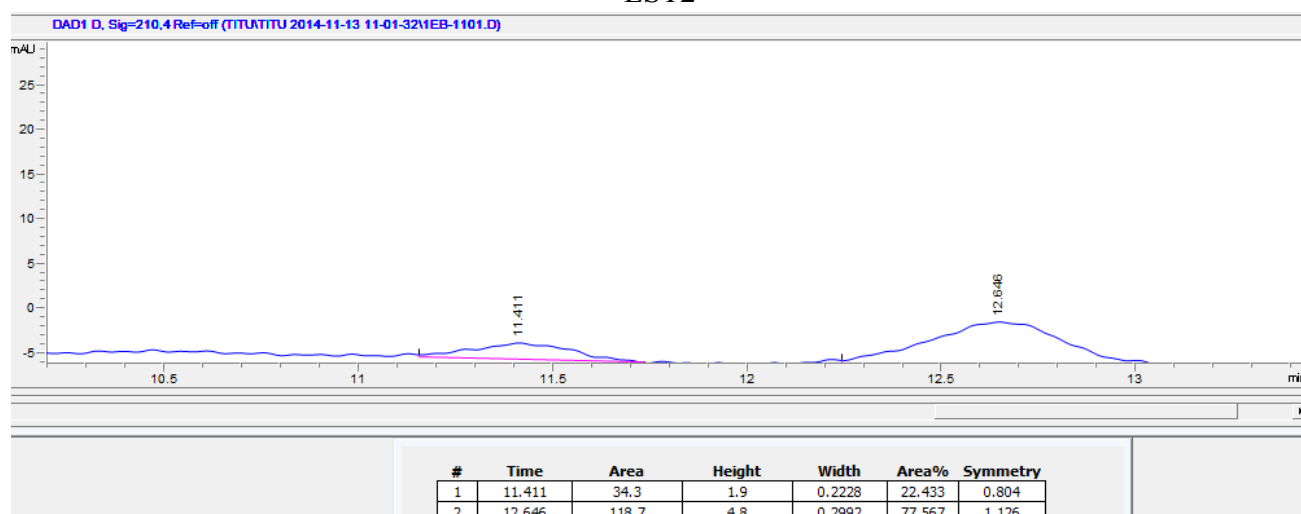
### RsEST



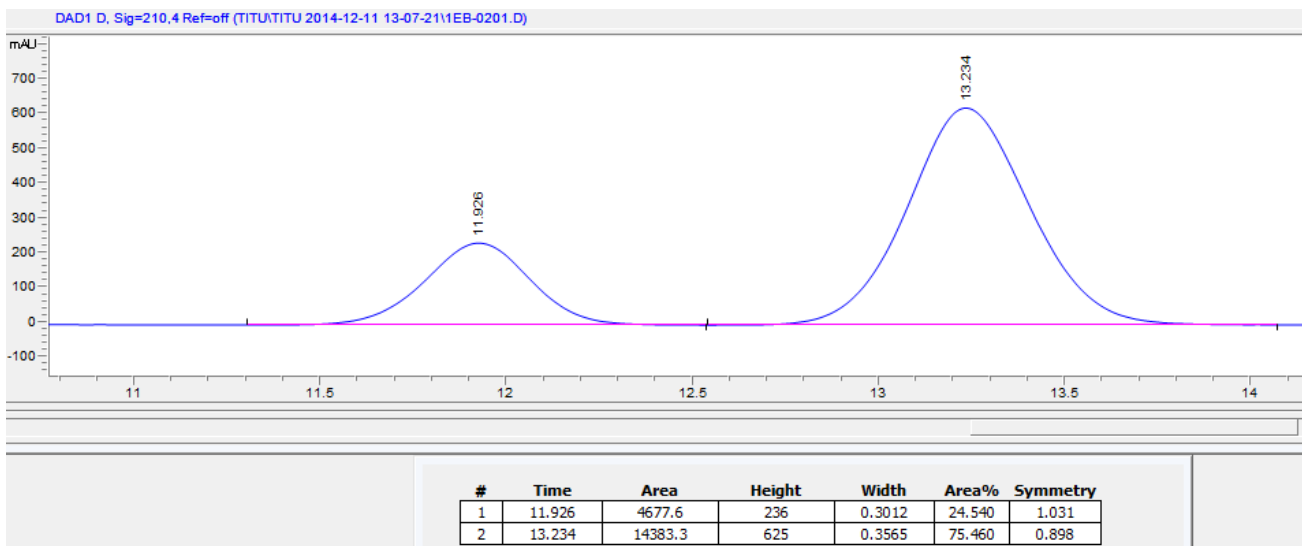
### EST1



### EST2

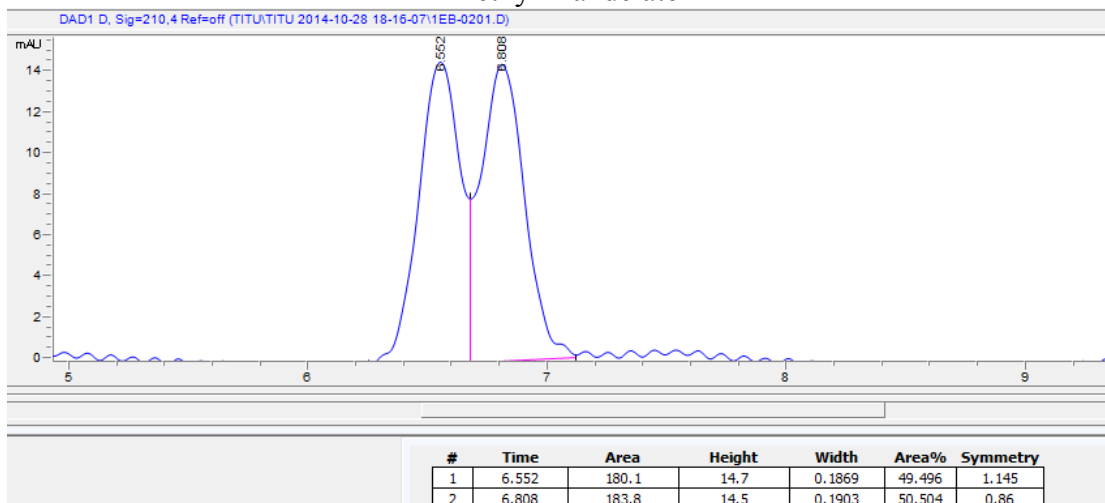


Porcine liver esterase (PLE) mediated hydrolysis of 5-phenyldihydrofuran-2(3H)-one to assign the first eluting peak as the fast-reacting (+)-enantiomer.

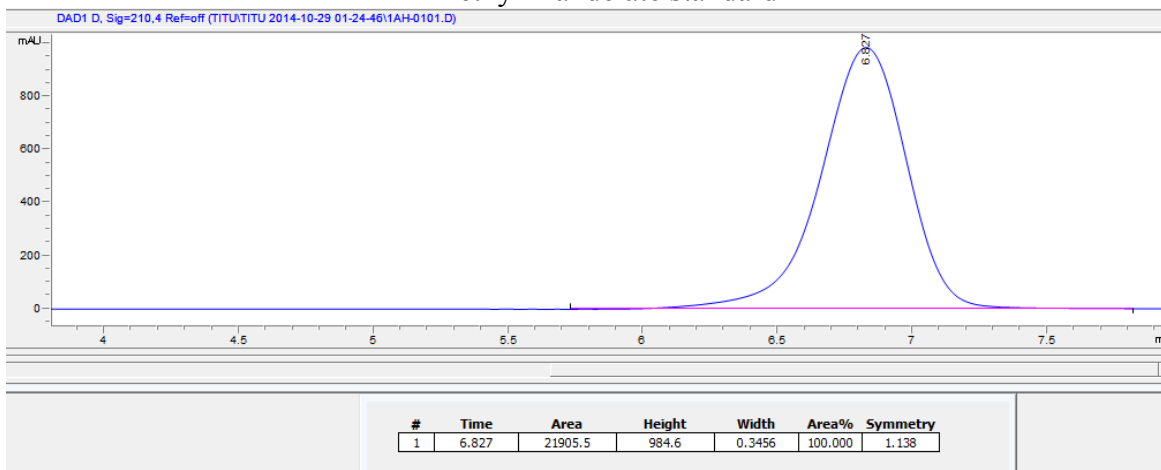


F: Hydrolysis of methyl mandelate (Chiralcel AS-RH, acetonitrile : H<sub>2</sub>O + 0.1% trifluoroacetic acid, 30:70)

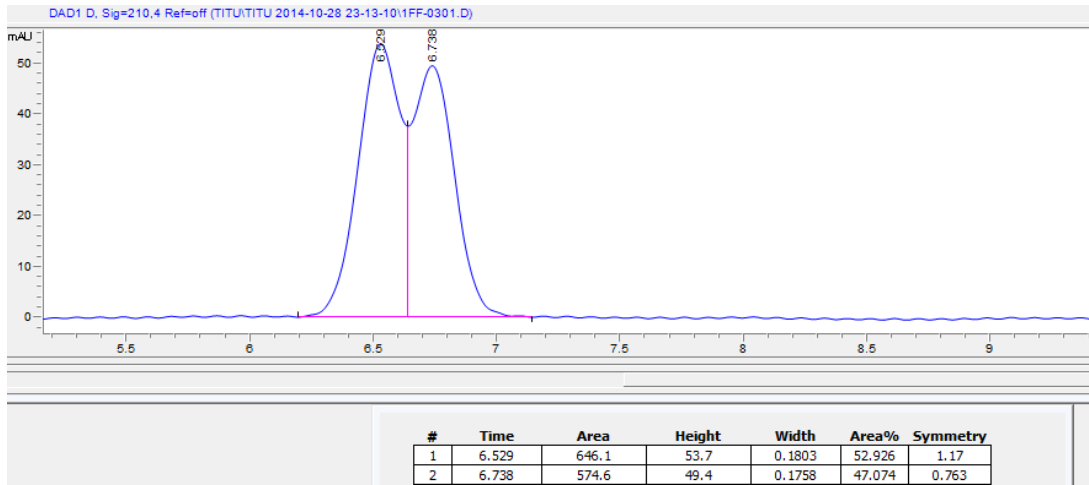
### Methyl mandelate



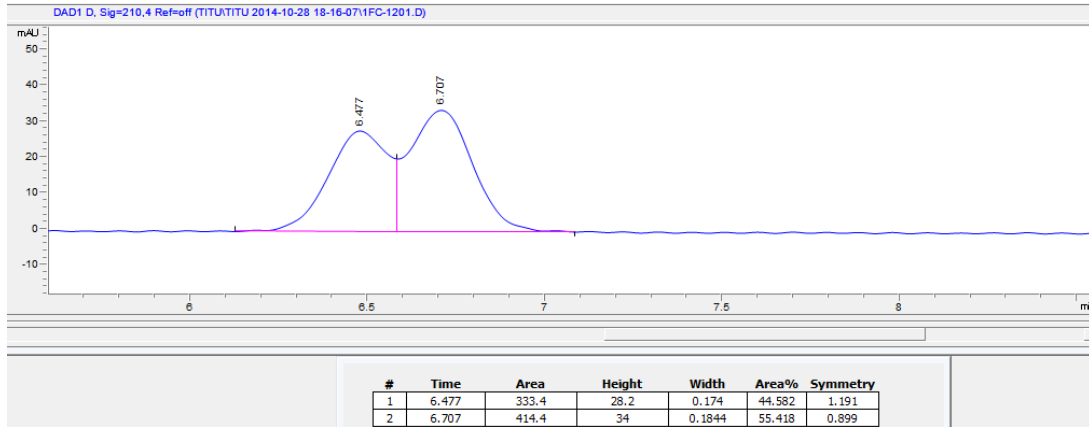
### R-methyl mandelate standard



## RsEST



## EST2



**Table S5.** Categorical summary of data in Table S1.

| Enzyme       | EC 4 |   | EC 3 |   |
|--------------|------|---|------|---|
|              | Y    | N | Y    | N |
| <i>HbHNL</i> | 6    | 0 | 1    | 5 |
| <i>MeHNL</i> | 6    | 0 | 0    | 6 |
| HNL1Mean     | 6    | 0 | 4    | 2 |
| EST3Mean     | 1    | 5 | 3    | 3 |
| EST2         | 2    | 4 | 6    | 0 |
| EST1         | 2    | 4 | 6    | 0 |
| SABP2        | 0    | 6 | 6    | 0 |
| <i>RcEST</i> | 0    | 6 | 5    | 1 |
| <i>RsEST</i> | 0    | 6 | 6    | 0 |
| AtHNL        | 2    | 4 | 4    | 2 |

**Table S6.** 2x2 Fisher's exact test the substrate and catalytic promiscuity of modern and ancestral enzymes.

| Enzyme    | natural reaction |    | unnatural reaction |    |
|-----------|------------------|----|--------------------|----|
|           | yes              | no | yes                | no |
| modern    | 33               | 3  | 3                  | 33 |
| ancestral | 21               | 9  | 9                  | 15 |

natural (substrate promiscuity),  $P = 0.67$

unnatural (catalytic promiscuity),  $P = 0.0085$

**Table S7.** Categorical summary of data in Table S2

| Enzyme       | non-selected reactions |   |
|--------------|------------------------|---|
|              | Y                      | N |
| <i>HbHNL</i> | 0                      | 4 |
| <i>MeHNL</i> | 0                      | 4 |
| HNL1Mean     | 0                      | 4 |
| EST3Mean     | 1                      | 3 |
| EST2         | 2                      | 2 |
| EST1         | 1                      | 3 |
| SABP2        | 1                      | 3 |
| <i>RcEST</i> | 0                      | 4 |
| <i>RsEST</i> | 1                      | 3 |
| <i>AtHNL</i> | 0                      | 4 |

**Table S8.** 2x2 Fisher's exact test the substrate and catalytic promiscuity of modern and ancestral enzymes.

| Enzyme    | non-selected reaction |    |
|-----------|-----------------------|----|
|           | yes                   | no |
| modern    | 2                     | 22 |
| ancestral | 6                     | 10 |

ancestral enzymes are more likely than modern enzymes to catalyze a promiscuous, non-selected reaction,  $P = 0.042$

### References

- Hillis, D. M.; Bull, J. J. *Syst. Biol.* **1993**, *42*, 182.
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