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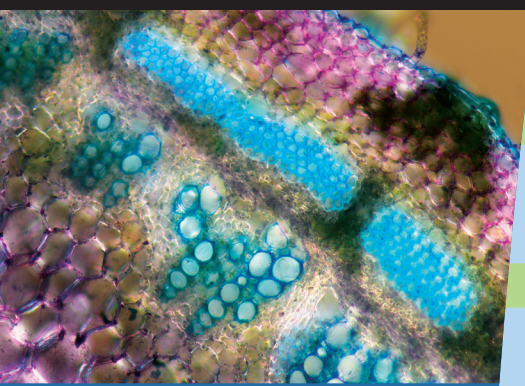

About Our Cover

This image shows a stem tissue cross section of stevia (*Stevia rebaudiana*) stained with toluidine blue. Viewing cross sections of plant tissue under a microscope, especially with the aid of stains, offers a visually engaging way to teach plant anatomy. By adding scale bars to microscopy images, students are able to measure structures and quantify observations. Microscopy activities can be conducted with any non-woody plant, but unique compounds within stevia stimulate further classroom discussion.

Stevia leaves contain glycosides extracted for use as non-nutritive sweeteners. Glycosides can be 300 times sweeter than sucrose, making the leaves quite sweet when bitten. What are you waiting for? Pull off a leaf to taste and use the stem to visualize plant anatomy.

This photo was taken by Maximo Larkin, a law student at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, using a 10× objective lens under a Nikon Eclipse Ti-E inverted light microscope and mounted Nikon DS-Ri2 camera. Maximo would like to thank Drs. David Shew and Alyssa Koehler for introducing him to stevia and for his undergraduate experiences in plant pathology at NC State University.

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