

Characterisation of AONS-OA methyl ester by mass spectrometry: Each reaction mixture contained 10 μ M AONS, 10 mM L-alanine methyl ester and 100 μ M pimeloyl-CoA in 20 mM sodium phosphate, pH 7.5. After 5 min at room temperature, 40 mM sodium cyanoborohydride (50 μ l) was added. This was incubated at room temperature before being injected into a Waters HPLC 2690 system with a Phenomenex C5 reverse phase column directly connected to a Micromass Platform II quadrupole mass spectrometer equipped with an electrospray ion source. The cone voltage was set to 70 V and the source temperature to 95 °C. The protein intermediates were eluted from the column using a linear gradient of 10 to 100% acetonitrile in water (containing 0.01% trifluoroacetic acid) over the course of 40 min at a flow rate of 0.05 ml/min. Spectra were combined and molecular masses were determined by the MaxEnt and Transform algorithms of the MassLynx software (MicroMass).