

**NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****DATE: 04.07.06****PHOTOGRAPH ATTACHED****-Copy Starts-****New Software for Automated Zone Analysis System  
Improves Speed and Accuracy of Antibiotic Sensitivity Testing**

**Cambridge, UK:** Synbiosis, a world-leading manufacturer of automated microbiological systems, is pleased to introduce new software for AutoZONE, its automatic zone analyser, which will help generate more accurate zone readings and save antibiotic manufacturers valuable time.

Using this new software, AutoZONE's computer controlled, high-resolution CCD camera can automatically begin zone measurement from the edge of an antibiotic disc and only produces data on the zone size. This allows users to obtain accurate information on inhibition zones without having to measure and subtract disc diameter sizes from their calculations and means microbiologists can perform tests with different antibiotic disc sizes on one plate, yet still obtain comparative results.

The AutoZONE software also has two additional new algorithms. The first ensures AutoZONE can detect low growth, where the zone is difficult to see compared to the background agar. This makes it easier for microbiologists to automatically detect zones on a wider range of media, avoiding the need for time consuming ad hoc manual reading. The second algorithm allows AutoZONE to generate precise measurements of a zone where its edge is not completely circular. By taking measurements from around the entire zone, AutoZONE's software produces an average diameter measurement with a +/- 0.01mm degree of error, which is significantly more accurate than those taken from a manual measurement.

Martin Smith, Divisional Manager for Synbiosis commented: "We are delighted with the new software for AutoZONE because it makes antibiotic susceptibility testing quicker and simpler to perform. With the new software AutoZONE can analyse 25 plates in the time it would take a microbiologist to manually measure just one, making it an essential tool for pharma companies that want to save time and money when developing and manufacturing new antibiotics."

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