

**NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Date: 08.05.17****Image Attached****-Copy Starts-****Synbiosis and AAA Lab Equipment Enter New Collaboration To Develop Walk-away System to Count Colonies on over 300 Plates per Hour**

**Cambridge, UK:** Synbiosis, a long-established, expert manufacturer of automated microbiological systems, is delighted to announce a new development collaboration with high quality laboratory automation firm, AAA Lab Equipment, to integrate a ProtoCOL 3 colony counting system within an Irina automated plate feeder. The integrated system will allow microbiologists to load plates and count colonies on up to 500 plates in 90 minutes, improving throughput and accuracy in QC laboratories.

Engineers at AAA Lab Equipment are working with Synbiosis to integrate the ProtoCOL 3 colony counter into their Irina automated plate feeding system. The plate feeder holds up to 500, 90mm plates in two carousels and automatically removes a plate from the carousel, reads and scans barcodes, removes the lid (if required) and will transfer the plate into an automated colony counter. Initially, AAA's technical experts are re-engineering the plate feeder's design for the ProtoCOL 3 system.

Engineers at AAA are also working to ensure the plate feeder will transfer a plate to the ProtoCOL 3, where a high-resolution CCD camera and unique LED lighting will produce images of colonies as small as 43 microns (0.043mm). The ProtoCOL 3 software will count colonies and produce accurate results which will be automatically transferred to Excel or a LIMS system and plate images will be stored in an SQL database. Additionally, AAA's software experts are programming the plate feeder to take account of the time a ProtoCOL 3 needs to count the colonies on each plate, to ensure the plate feeder's loading arm replaces the plate into a second carousel after it has been analysed so that microbiologists know which plates have been read.

Commenting on the new collaboration, Peter Krul, CEO of AAA Lab Equipment said: "We were approached by a large food microbiology testing facility in 2016 and asked if we could integrate an automated colony counter into our Irina plate feeder. Since then we have been working with the Synbiosis team for six months

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to re-engineer our plate feeder hardware and software for use with a ProtoCOL 3 colony counter. We know now that we can custom produce this cutting edge, walkaway technology for any food or environmental microbiology client requesting it.”

To see how an integrated plate feeding and plate reading system will perform in real-time, click this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ulod3r2MnU0>

“We’re delighted to be collaborating with AAA Lab Equipment to help them develop a truly walk away, colony counting system” explains Kate George, Senior Divisional Manager at Synbiosis. “Integrating the ProtoCOL 3 into the Irina plate feeder will ensure quick, accurate generation of fully traceable data and will provide a significant competitive advantage for any high throughput microbiology testing facility using this exciting technology.”

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### **Note to Editors**

#### **About Synbiosis**

Synbiosis is a world-leading supplier of integrated imaging solutions for automatic counting and analysis of microbial colonies and zone measurement. The ProtoCOL, Protos and aCOLyte systems from Synbiosis are installed in food, pharmaceutical, environmental and research microbiology laboratories world-wide. ChromaZona is an IVD certified instrument for automated microbial ID and AST in the clinical laboratory. Synbiosis uses established distribution channels to market its products internationally.

Synbiosis, founded in 1998 is a division of the Synoptics Group of the AIM quoted Scientific Digital Imaging Company based in Cambridge, UK. The Group’s other divisions, Syngene and Synoptics Health, specialise in digital imaging solutions for molecular biology and healthcare applications respectively. Synoptics, which celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of being in business in 2015, currently employs 40 people in its UK and subsidiary operation in Frederick, USA.

### **About AAA Lab Equipment**

AAA Lab Equipment designs and develops easy-to-use, reliable laboratory automation for food safety testing facilities. Founded in 2010, the company, based at Roelofarendsveen in the Netherlands is a division of established engineering firm, PK machinebouw, which has been in operation since 1990.