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NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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New Debris Exclusion Features of Automated Colony Counter Saves *Food Manufacturers Money by Rapidly Detecting Hazardous Organisms*

Cambridge, UK: Synbiosis, a world-leading manufacturer of automated micro-biological systems, is pleased to announce its ProtoCOL automated colony counter offers new features to exclude food debris from the count. This makes counting faster and more reliable, ensuring microbiologists can easily determine the levels of bacteria or moulds in food earlier, thus avoiding costly product recalls.

The ProtoCOL system's new software can simultaneously analyse images of the same or several different coloured colonies on spiral, pour or surface inoculated plates and has different levels of user access to provide lab managers with control of the system. The software has been upgraded so microbiologists can train the ProtoCOL to automatically recognise by either colour and shape colonies they would expect to see, whilst excluding fibrous food debris such as meat or fish from the count. This helps reduce manual analysis and means results are quickly obtained.

Results from the ProtoCOL system are highly reproducible and can be auto-matically transferred into Excel where a sample name can be entered into the database, thereby reducing the operator variation that can occur from different microbiologists' manual colony counts. An image library is also created alongside the Excel database making it easy to produce evidence for each food tested and allowing lab managers the option to re-visit a plate if there is any query after its disposal. The ProtoCOL software is GLP compliant and tracks any changes to results, making ProtoCOL ideal for use as part of a HACCP programme.

Martin Smith of Synbiosis commented: "Rapid microbiological testing of food products and raw materials is vitally important in food production. However, the accurate analysis of colonies on plates is frequently made difficult by the presence of debris or bubbles, either embedded within or on the agar's surface.

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News Release

By utilising the ProtoCOL's excellent new software features, microbiologists can overcome these problems with ease to ensure food and ingredients are released more rapidly, thus saving money on storage costs and allowing products to have a longer shelf-life."

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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 and åCOLyte systems from Synbiosis are installed in food, pharmaceutical, environmental and research microbiology laboratories world-wide. Synbiosis uses established distribution channels to market its products internationally.

Synbiosis, founded in 1998 is a division of the Synoptics Group based in Cambridge UK. The Group's other divisions, Syncroscopy and Syngene, specialise in digital imaging solutions for microscopy and molecular biology applications respectively. Synoptics currently employs 40 people in its UK and US subsidiary operation.