

NEWS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Date: 19.06.09****-Copy Starts-****ProtoCOL at Major Food Technology Centre
Is Helping to Maintain the Highest Food Safety Standards**

Cambridge, UK: Synbiosis, a world-leading manufacturer of automated microbiological systems today announced its ProtoCOL automated colony counter is being used for training and research at a leading food technology centre, the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise, (CAFRE) in Northern Ireland to accurately count different bacteria isolated from many food types.

Microbiologists and Food Hygiene students at CAFRE's Loughry Campus are using the ProtoCOL to automatically perform total cell counts of many bacterial species spiral plated on Plate Count Agar. The ProtoCOL is also being applied to counting red *E.coli* colonies on a background of blue coliforms plated on selective Coli ID plates, making it quick and easy to detect potentially hazardous levels of *E.coli*.

Edmund Slaine, a Scientific Officer at CAFRE commented: "We have used a ProtoCOL system for over four years both for education and research purposes. It is an excellent instrument for students because they can easily obtain accurate results from complex counts of different coloured colonies on the same plate with minimal training."

"We also use the ProtoCOL to help with product innovation. By counting bacteria isolated from shellfish, sausages and beef burgers, we can rapidly provide feedback to the food industry on to how to improve food safety," continued Slaine.

Martin Smith of Synbiosis concluded: "The amount of analysis and training in which the ProtoCOL is used at CAFRE by novice and experienced scientists alike is a great endorsement of this product's performance and robustness. The continued use of the system at such a major food technology facility to precisely count many colony types isolated from different foods shows ProtoCOL is a versatile, essential tool that will save valuable time in any food microbiology laboratory."

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News Release

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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. 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.

About CAFRE

The College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) has three campuses in Northern Ireland, based at Enniskillen, Antrim (Greenmount Campus) and Cookstown (Loughry Campus). Loughry Campus has excellent facilities to support food education including chemistry and microbiological laboratories and a dedicated food technology facility. The 4,000 square metre hi-tech food centre features the latest design and materials for producing food to EU standards, incorporating four mini processing areas: meat, bakery, fruit and vegetable, as well as dairy sectors. The latest technologies in food analysis are continuously being reviewed at Loughry, enabling students to gain valuable knowledge and experience relevant to a future career in the industry.