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NEWS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Image Attached

News Release

-Copy Starts-

Automated Colony Counter at Major Yeast Genetics Lab

Is Speeding up Counts of Yeast Colonies in Cancer Associated DNA Repair Research

Frederick, MD: Synbiosis, a world-leading manufacturer of automated micro-biological systems, is delighted to announce its innovative ProtoCOL 2 automated colony counter is being utilized at the prestigious Emory University, in Atlanta, Georgia, USA to rapidly and accurately count colonies of yeast, used as a model system for human DNA repair research.

Geneticists in the Department of Biology at Emory University are using ProtoCOL 2 to count colonies of the yeast *Saccharomyces cerevisiae*, to accurately assess how many yeast cells can repair their DNA after they have been subjected to various types of mutagenesis. In general, repair systems in *S. cerevisiae* are good models for human repair. Therefore, scientists at Emory believe that showing why and how cells repair their DNA in this yeast could help better understand and treat human diseases such as colorectal cancer associated with DNA mismatch repair defects.

Gray Crouse, Professor of Biology at Emory University commented: “Since we need sufficient data points for statistical analysis, we spent a lot of time manually counting hundreds of plates. This was a task our trained staff did not find enjoyable or easy. We tried image analysis software to automate the process but found it couldn’t discriminate different colonies if they were clumped together, as well as being very time consuming to use. We were shown a ProtoCOL 2 and were so impressed by its price and utility, that we installed one.”

Professor Crouse continued: “ProtoCOL 2 can count colonies according to size or color (occasionally we use marker genes which color colonies red; after mutagenesis, yeast cells can sometimes vary greatly in size). To have a segregated count of different sizes or colors is an amazingly useful feature for us.

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Most importantly, ProtoCOL 2 indicates every colony it has counted with a dot so we can manually review tricky areas. Overall, we have been very pleased to have ProtoCOL 2 and it is proving to be an invaluable addition to our lab."

Paula Maia of Synbiosis said: "Many academic scientists want to rapidly count colonies with inexpensive automation to improve the accuracy of their results and we are pleased that geneticists at Emory University believe our ProtoCOL 2 delivers this. Their work indicates that if your lab wants a colony counter to detect small colonies, or analyze colonies of varying sizes and distinguish different colored colonies, yet you don't have a huge budget for equipment, then you have to have a ProtoCOL 2."

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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, specialize in digital imaging solutions for microscopy and molecular biology applications respectively. Synoptics currently employs 40 people in its UK and US subsidiary operation.

About the Department of Biology at Emory University

The Department of Biology at Emory University supports outstanding research and teaching of the next generation of biologists, physicians and other professionals. The Department has research programs in cell biology, genetics, developmental biology, molecular biology, computational neuroscience, bioinformatics, ecology and pathogen evolution, which it believes will help extend the boundaries of human knowledge and existence.