



Increasing bacterial RNA-seq  
sensitivity through efficient  
rRNA removal

Samuel Rulli, Ph.D.  
Senior Global Product Manager

## Legal disclaimer

QIAGEN products shown here are intended for molecular biology applications. These products are not intended for the diagnosis, prevention or treatment of a disease.

For up-to-date licensing information and product-specific disclaimers, see the respective QIAGEN kit handbook or user manual. QIAGEN kit handbooks and user manuals are available at [www.qiagen.com](http://www.qiagen.com) or can be requested from QIAGEN Technical Services or your local distributor.

# Agenda

Background

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An introduction

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Results

---

Summary

---



# Agenda

## Background

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An introduction

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Results

---

Summary

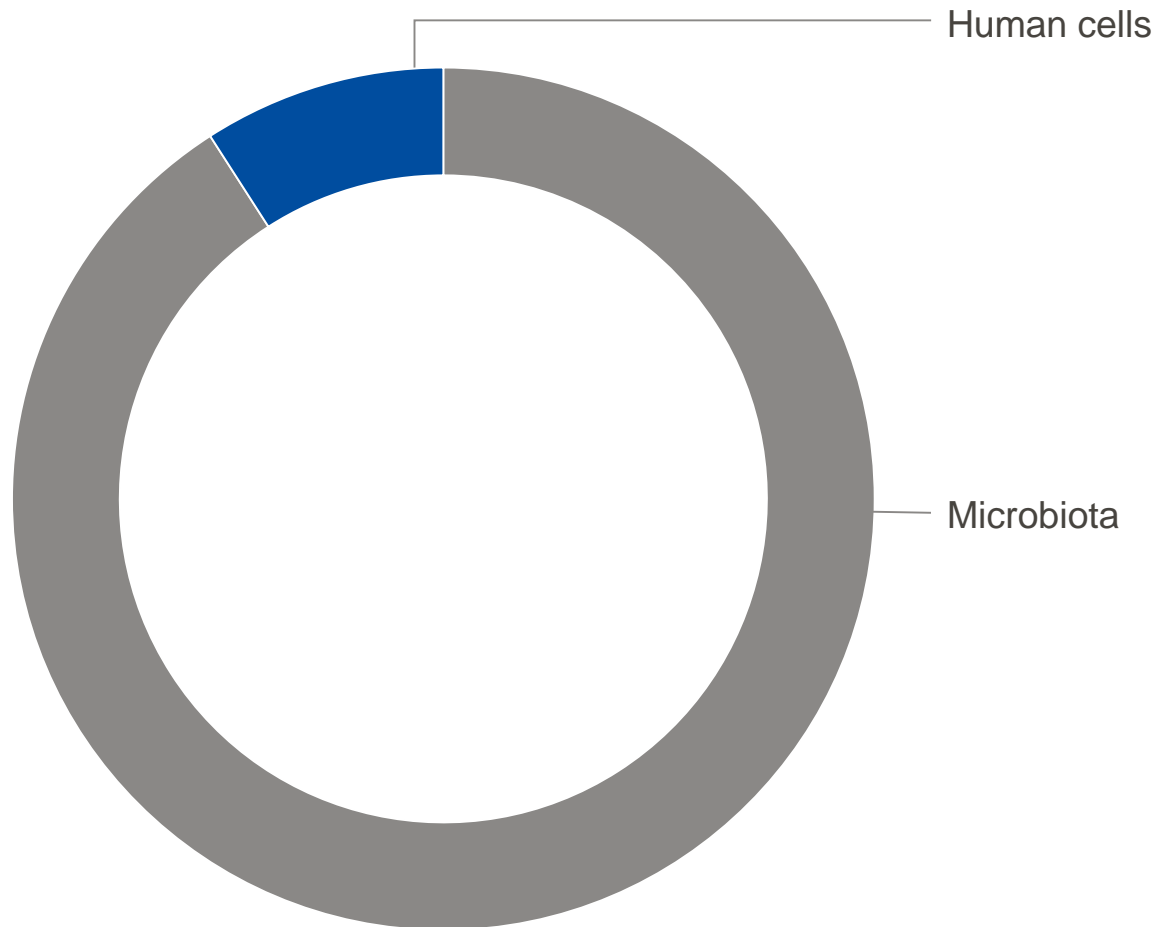
---





# Humans or ‘superorganisms’?

## Total number of cells: Human cells versus microbiota



## Cellular composition of the ‘superorganism’

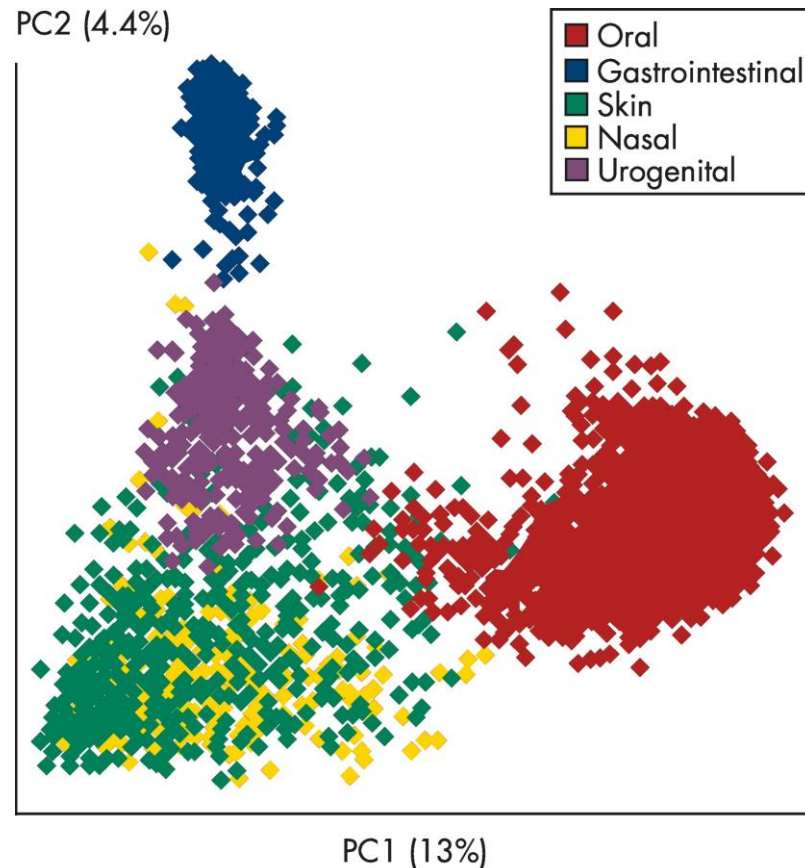
Estimation of the number of microbial cells that live in and on the human body; human cells are outnumbered by a factor of 10

Nomenclature:

- **Microbiota** are the microbes that live in a specific location, e.g., the human body, the gut, soil, etc.
- **Metagenomics** is the study of the collection of genomes derived from a specific sample or community
- **Metatranscriptomics** is the study of the RNA expression of genes from a community sample to interpret the physiological state of that community at that time

# Microbiota composition

## Microorganisms cluster by body site



Cataloguing efforts by the NIH Human Microbiome Project suggest:

- Around 10,000 organisms live with us
- Around  $8 \times 10^6$  genes constitute this 'second genome'

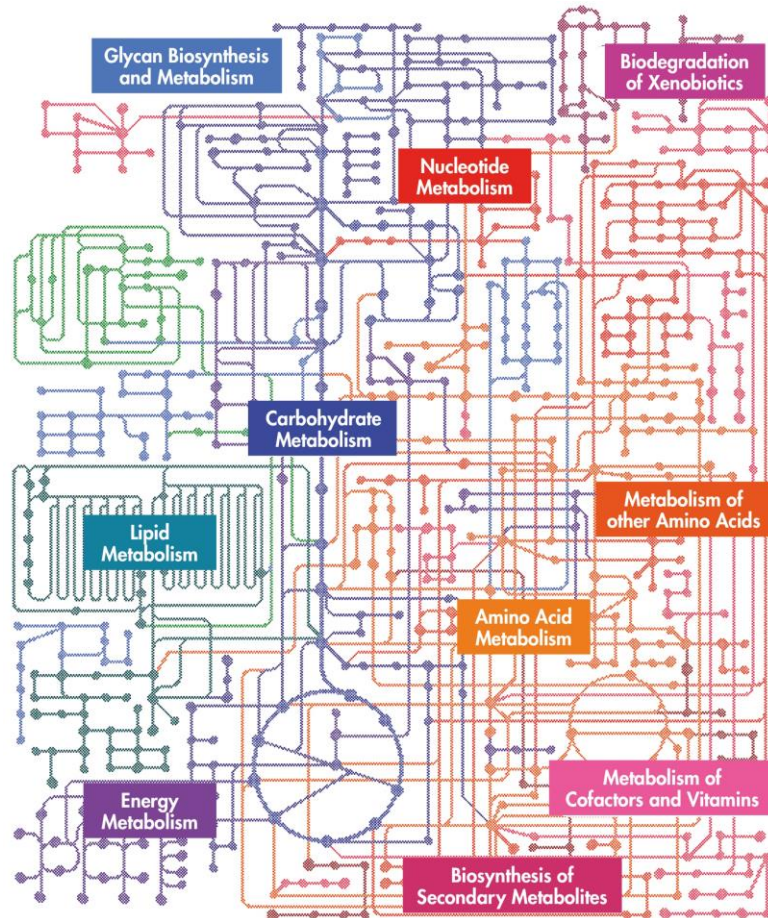
Identifying microbiota in healthy individuals revealed:

- Different body sites have unique communities
- Race, age, gender, weight or ethnicity can affect microbiota composition

Human Microbiome Project Consortium (2012). Structure, function and diversity of the healthy human microbiome. *Nature*, 486(7402), 207–214.

# Complexity and function of genomic content

## Function of microbiome enables individual survival

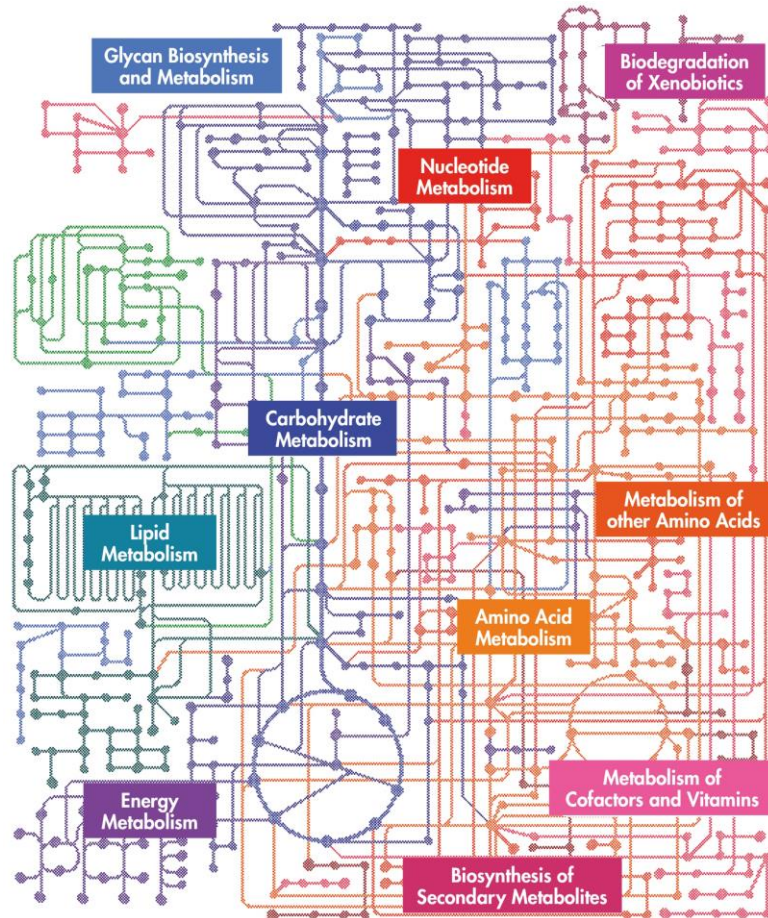


Each organism has developed its:

- Genetic content for its own survival in a specific environment
- Metabolism tuned to local nutrient sources
- Virulence factors for stable colonization
- Antibiotic resistance genes to metabolize toxins

# Complexity and function of genomic content

## Function of microbiome enables individual survival



## Understanding the microbiota

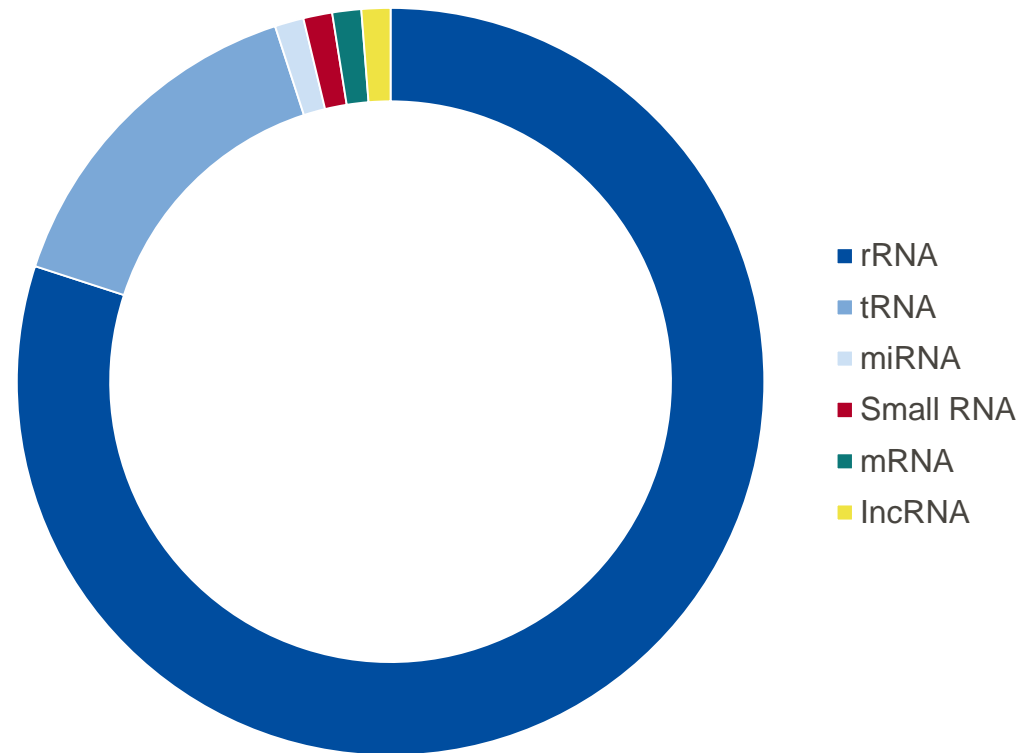
- DNA – who is or was there
- RNA – who is alive and what they are doing
- RNA can be used to identify:
  - Metabolic status
  - Expression of virulence factors
  - Expression of antibiotic resistance
  - Both host and microbiota



# Library enrichment/depletion strategies: Whole transcriptome NGS

Enrichment or depletion is necessary to maximize reads from the RNAs of interest

- Typical RNA composition in a cell: >80% ribosomal RNA
- Highly abundant transcripts consume a lot of reads
- Enrichment or depletion is used to obtain more reads from the RNAs of interest, such as:
  - mRNA
  - lncRNA

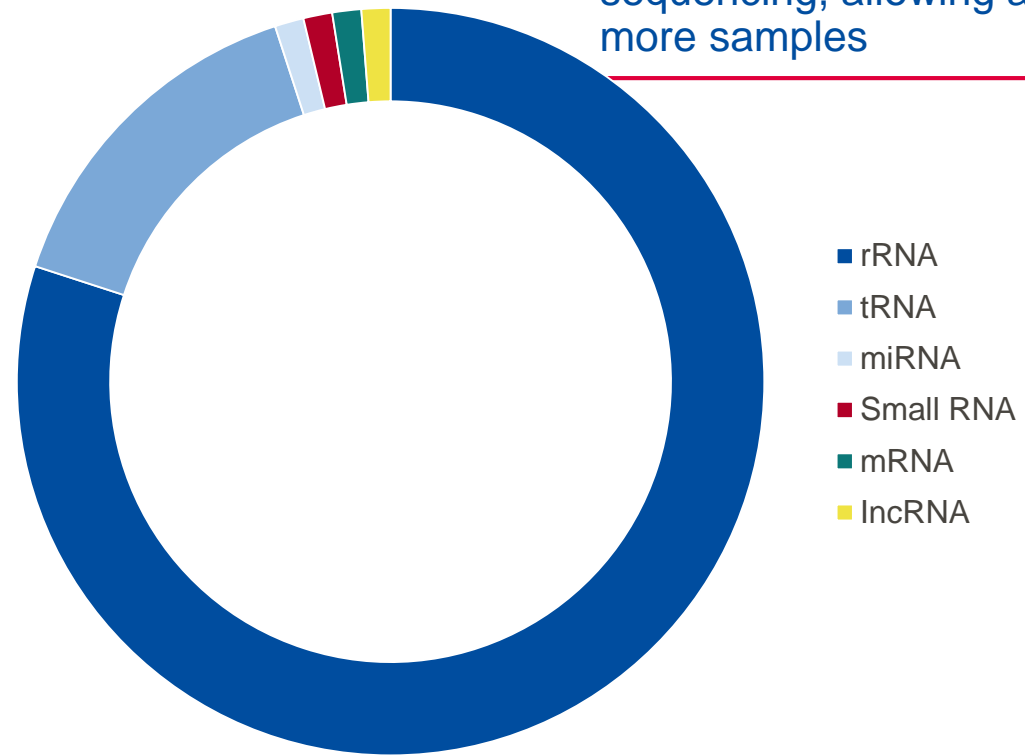


# Library enrichment/depletion strategies: Whole transcriptome NGS

Enrichment or depletion is necessary to maximize reads from the RNAs of interest

- Typical RNA composition in a cell: >80% ribosomal RNA
- Highly abundant transcripts consume a lot of reads
- Enrichment or depletion is used to obtain more reads from the RNAs of interest, such as:
  - mRNA
  - lncRNA

Removing rRNA will increase sensitivity and decrease the cost of sequencing, allowing analysis of more samples



# Library enrichment/depletion strategies: Whole transcriptome NGS

## Enrichment/depletion strategies

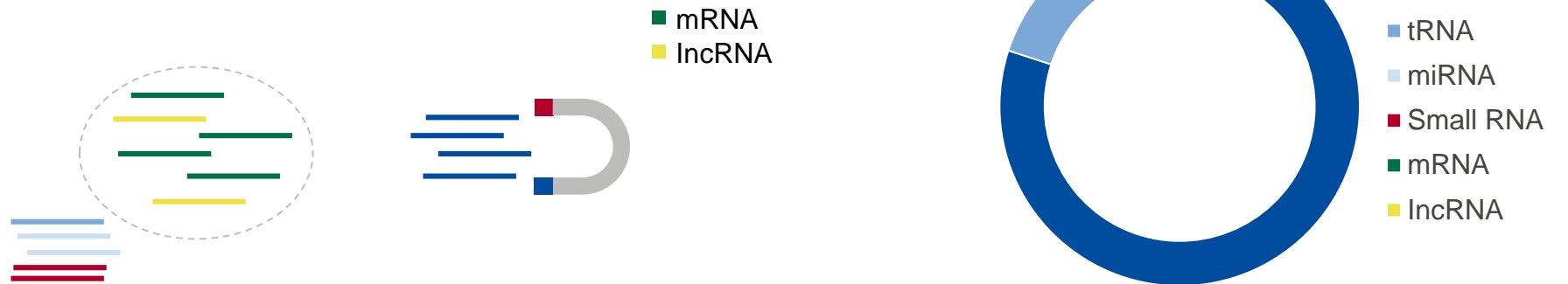
### Poly(A) enrichment

- Not useful for fragmented samples
- Not useful for prokaryotic samples



### rRNA depletion

- The “catch all” method



- rRNA depletion is the only choice for metatranscriptomics.

# Agenda

Background

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An introduction

---

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Results

---

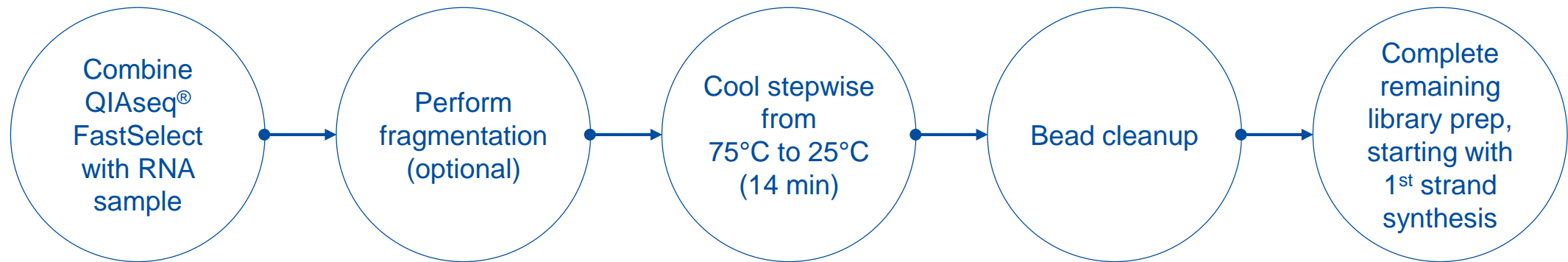
Summary

---





## FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An overview



# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An overview

## What is FastSelect –5S/16S/23S?

- Fragmentation and pan-bacterial (5S/16S/23S) rRNA depletion module

## Number of reactions:

- 24, 96 and 384

## How does it work?

- Inhibits reverse transcription of its specific targets

## Coverage:

- Designed to block **community level** cDNA synthesis of 5S, 16S and 23S rRNA
- Designed against SILVA 16S sequences (nearly 600,000 unique entries), SILVA 23S sequences (nearly unique 170,000 entries) and 5S rRNA Database (over 7,200 unique entries)
- Theoretically blocks >95% cDNA synthesis of all 5S, 16S and 23S rRNA sequences
  - In practice, results will vary, based on the exact composition of the sample

## Total RNA input:

- 20 ng to 1 µg

## Tested RNA library prep kit compatibility:

- QIAseq Stranded Total RNA Lib Kit (QIAGEN Group), TruSeq® Stranded (Illumina®, Inc), NEBNext® Ultra II Directional (New England Biolabs, Inc)
- FastSelect is compatible with most RNA library prep kits

## FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: What's in the box?

### Kit sizes:

- 24 (cat. no. 335925)
- 96 (cat. no. 335927)
- 384 (cat. no. 335929)

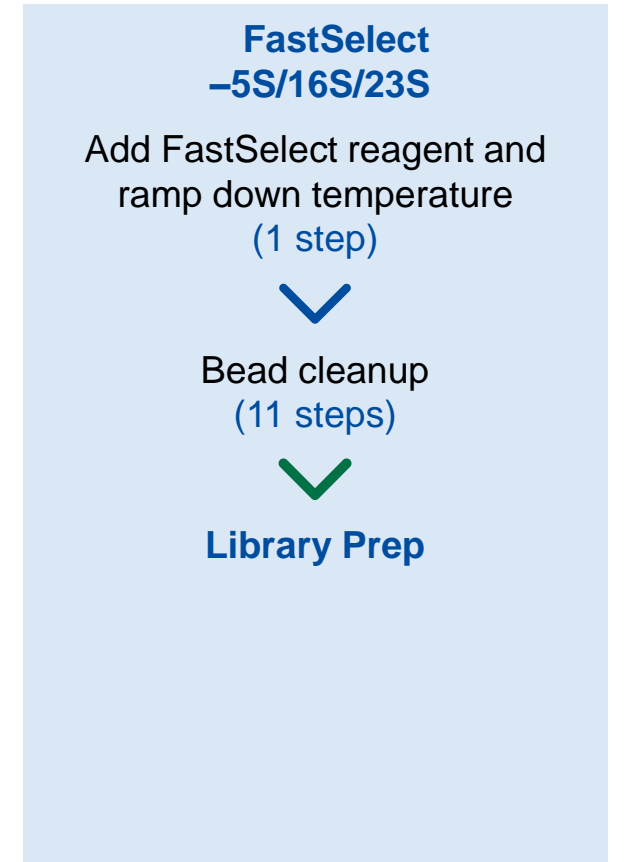
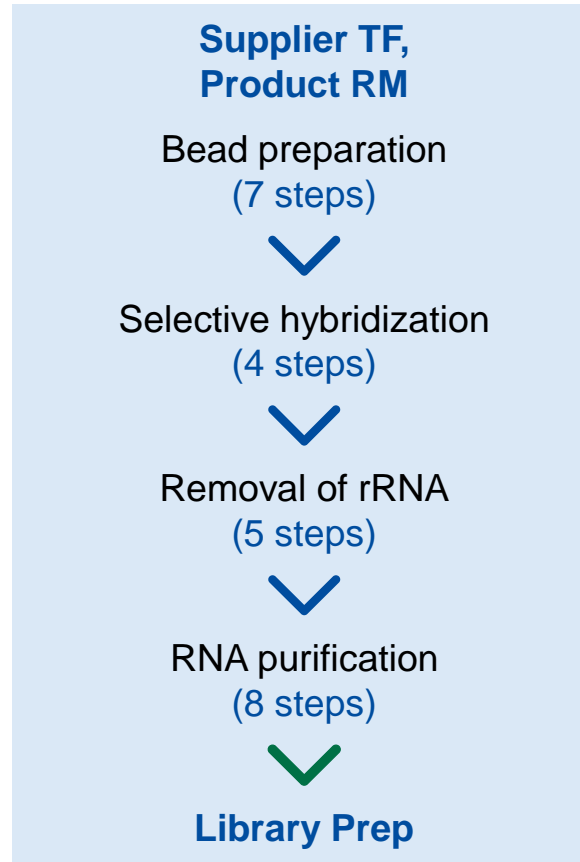
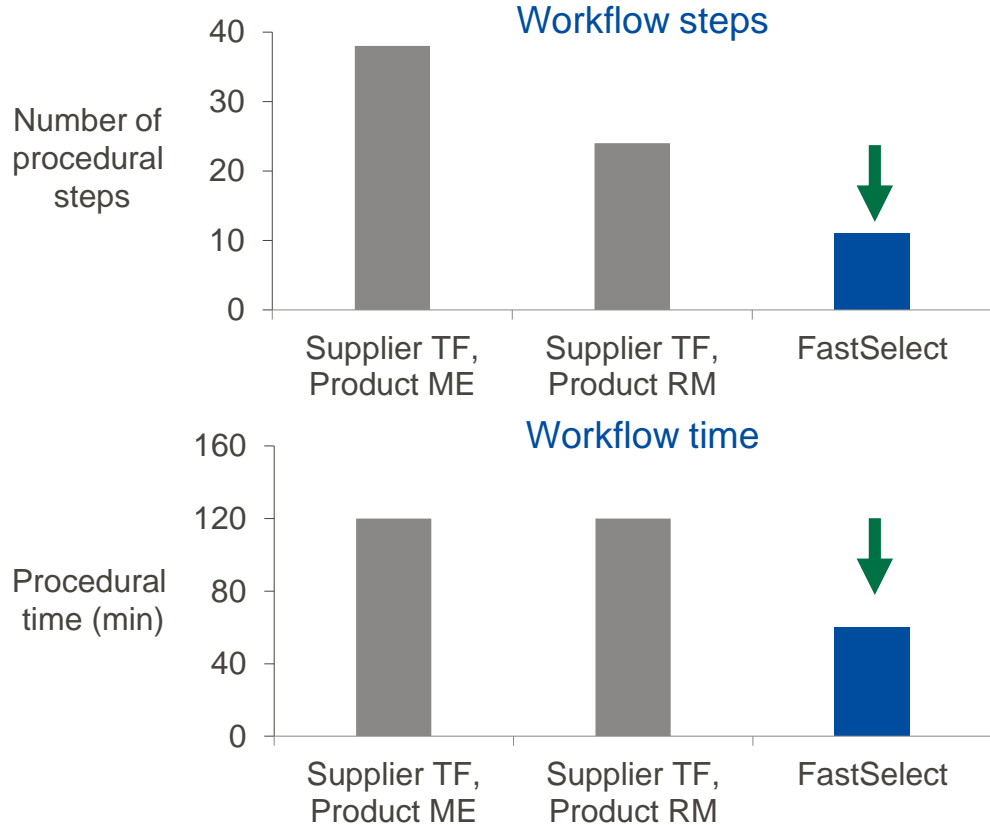
### Kit components and purpose:

- FastSelect 5S/16S/23S: rRNA removal reagent
- FastSelect FH Buffer: Fragmentation and/or hybridization buffer
- Nuclease-free Water
- QIAseq Beads
- QIAseq Bead Binding Buffer



# QIAseq FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: rRNA removal

Half your effort and time



- FastSelect offers an attractive, streamlined workflow versus kits from another supplier.



# Agenda

Background

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An introduction

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Results

---

Summary

---



# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Robust rRNA removal from bacterial communities

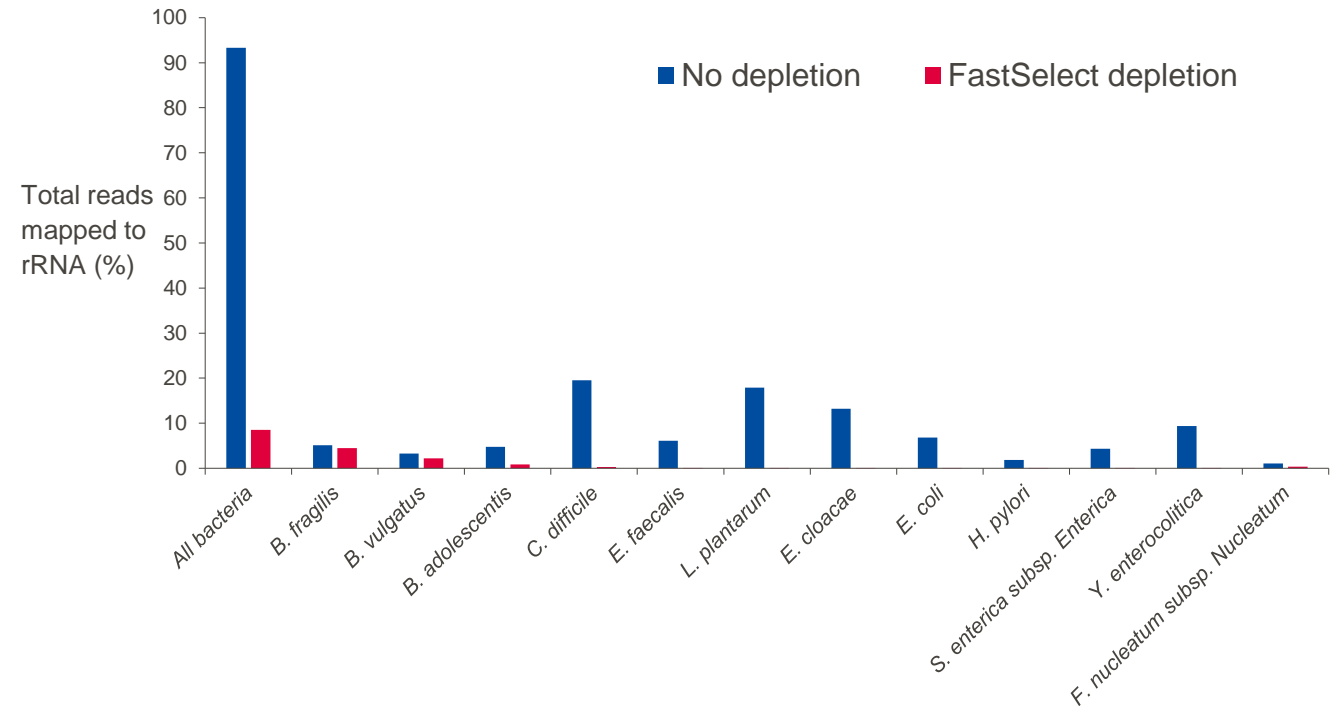
## Experimental overview

- Sample: 100 ng, Gut Microbiome Whole Cell Mix (ATCC)
- Depletion: No depletion, FastSelect –5S/16S/23S
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded Total RNA Lib Kit
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550 (2 x 75 bp)
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

## FastSelect substantially removes rRNA

Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)	
	No treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S
ATCC Gut Microbiome (12 bacteria)	<b>96.35</b>	<b>12.32</b>

## Robust depletion of rRNA from individual species



FastSelect removes nearly 90% of all rRNA. When individual species are mapped, FastSelect removes rRNA from a broad range of species.

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Robust rRNA removal from bacterial communities (cont.)

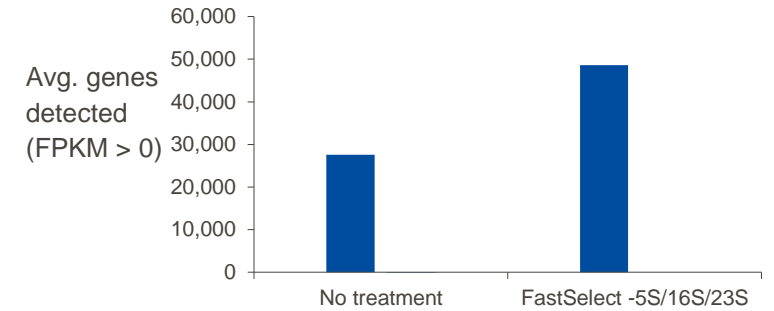
## Experimental overview

- Sample: 100 ng, 20 Strain Even Mix Whole Cell Material (ATCC) + Skin Microbiome Whole Cell Mix (ATCC) + Oral Microbiome Whole Cell Mix (ATCC)
- Depletion: No depletion, FastSelect
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

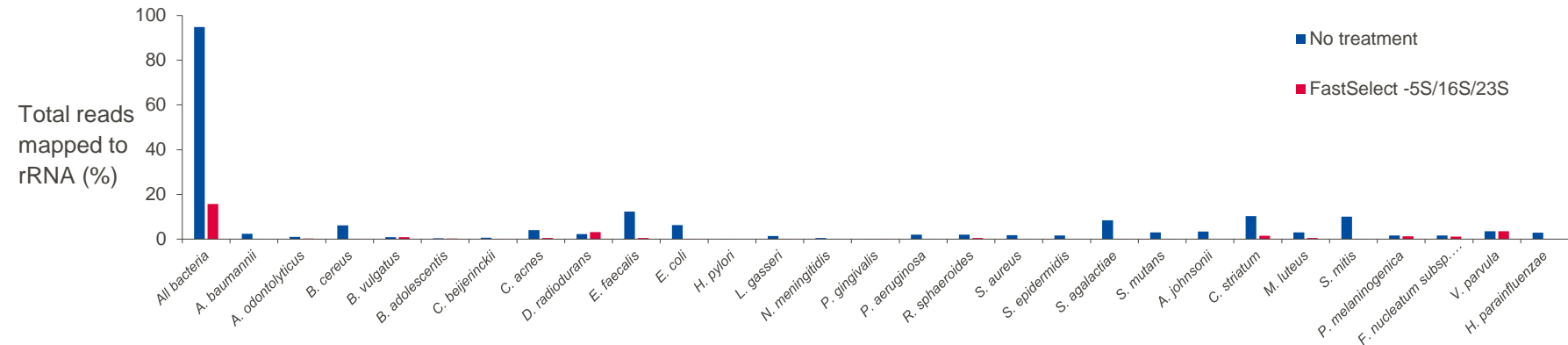
## FastSelect substantially removes rRNA

Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)	
	No Treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S
ATCC 3 Mix (28 bacteria), R1	<b>94.81</b>	<b>16.97</b>
ATCC 3 Mix (28 bacteria), R2	<b>94.71</b>	<b>14.45</b>

## FastSelect increases detected genes



## FastSelect robustly depletes rRNA (individual species)



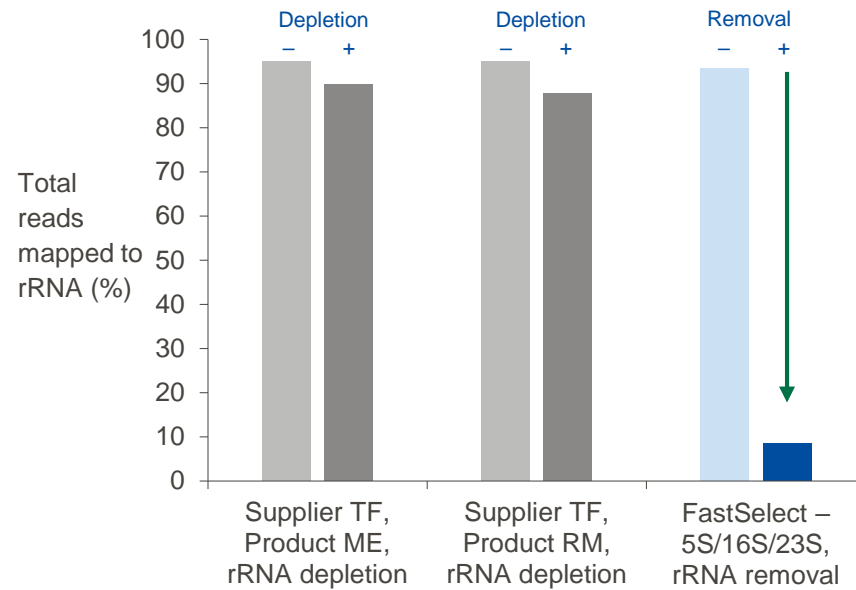
FastSelect efficiently removes rRNA, freeing up substantial read budget. In turn, this read budget enables a dramatic increase in the number of genes detected.

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S dramatically outperforms the other supplier's kits

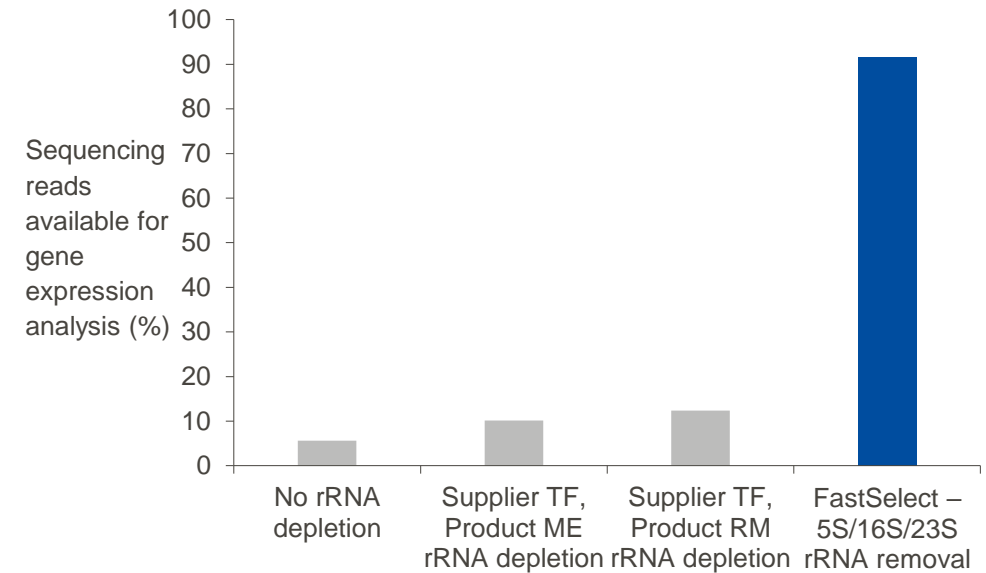
## Experimental overview

- Sample: 1 µg, Gut Microbiome Whole Cell Mix (ATCC)
- Depletion: No depletion, Supplier TF – Product ME, Supplier TF – Product RM, FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

## FastSelect robustly removes rRNA, while the other supplier's kits do not



## FastSelect frees up reads for gene detection

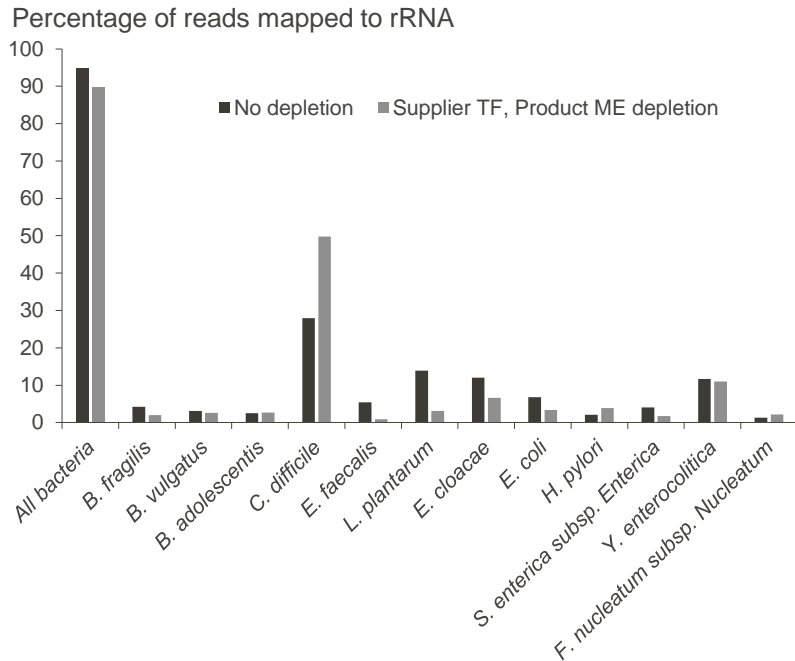


FastSelect efficiently removes rRNA, while Supplier TF's rRNA depletion products do not. The robust rRNA removal frees up a substantial amount of sequencing reads (9x compared to the other supplier's kits) for gene expression analysis.

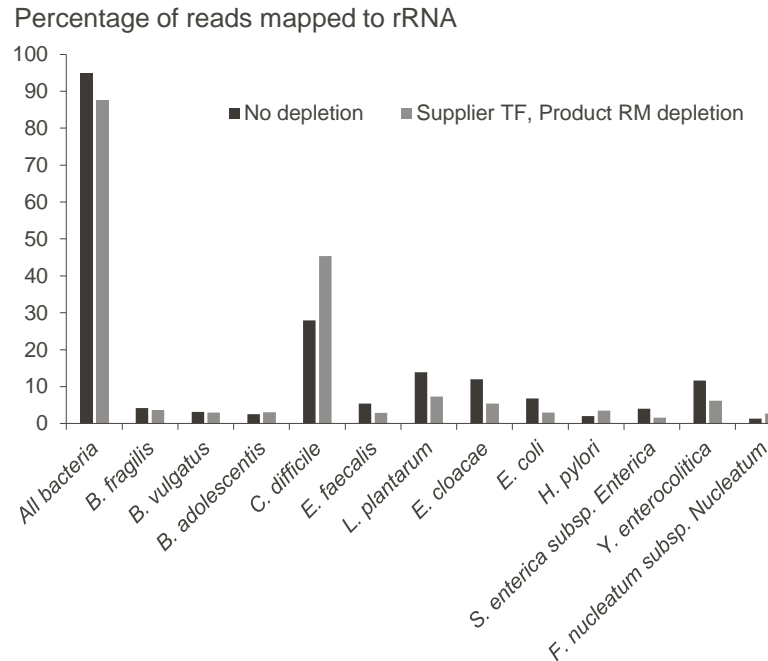


# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S dramatically outperforms the other supplier’s kits

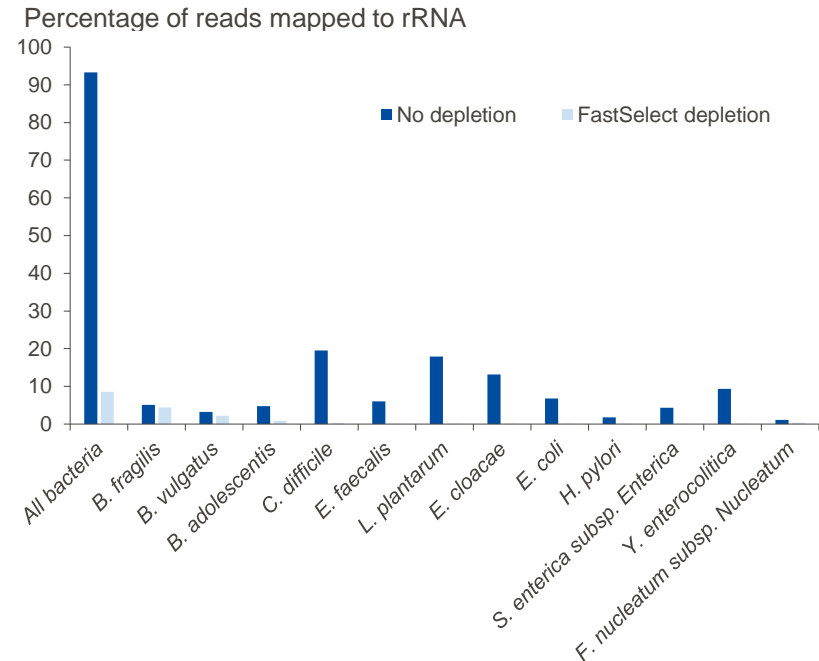
## Supplier TF, Product ME



## Supplier TF, Product RM



## FastSelect –5S/16S/23S

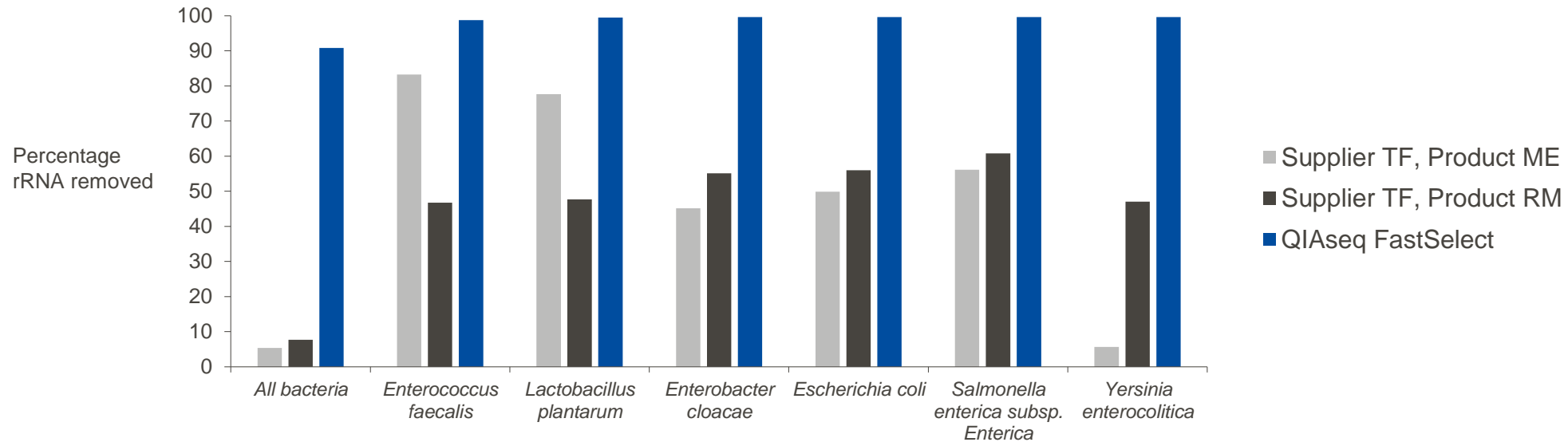


The three figures depict the percentage of rRNA removed for “all bacteria” and the individual species in the community.

● FastSelect efficiently removes rRNA from a broad range of bacterial species, while Supplier TF, Product ME and Supplier TF, Product RM do not.

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S dramatically outperforms the other supplier’s kits

FastSelect robustly removes rRNA, while the other supplier’s kits do not



When “all bacteria” are analyzed, FastSelect removes greater than 90% of all rRNA, while other supplier’s kits remove less than 10%. When select, individual bacteria are analyzed, the depletion varies for the other supplier’s kits, while it remains consistently high for FastSelect.

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S robustly removes rRNA from single-species samples

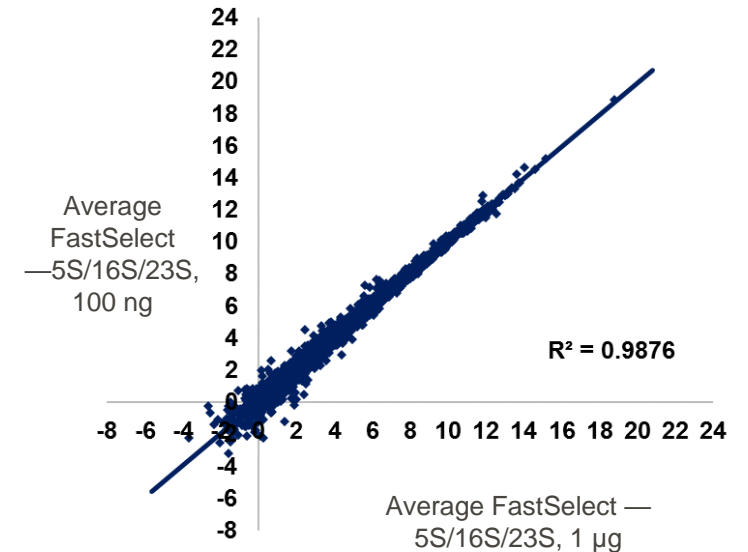
## Experimental overview

- Sample: 1 µg and 100 ng, DH5α *E. coli* total RNA (Thermo Fisher)
- Depletion: No depletion; FastSelect
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

## FastSelect substantially removes rRNA

Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to rRNA, FastSelect –5S/16S/23S	
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 1 µg, R1	2.01	
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 1 µg, R2	1.88	
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 100 ng, R1	0.55	
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 100 ng, R2	2.57	
Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA	
	No treatment	FastSelect –5S/16S/23S
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 100 ng, R1	97.79	0.55
<i>E. coli</i> K12, 100 ng, R2	97.08	2.57

## Strong gene expression correlation between inputs



FastSelect efficiently removes rRNA. Gene expression values from FastSelect-treated samples, even at different RNA input amounts, are highly correlative (Log2 RPKM > 0.3).

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S does not alter gene expression

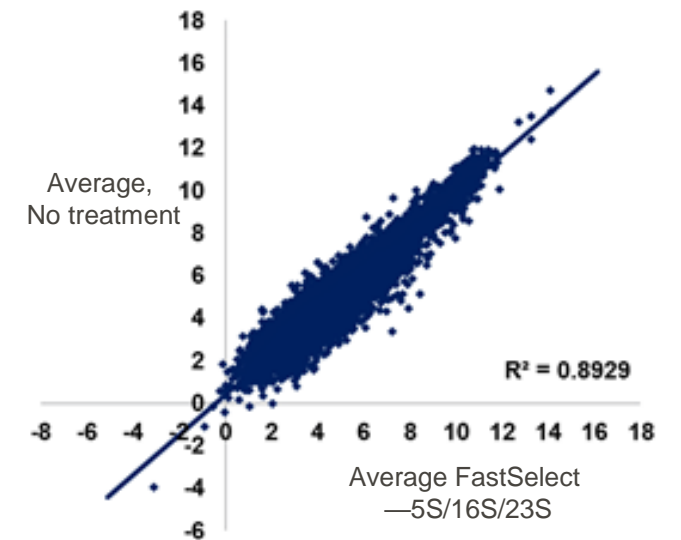
## Experimental overview

- Sample: 100 ng, Gut Microbiome Whole Cell Mix
- Depletion: No depletion, FastSelect
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

## FastSelect substantially removes rRNA

Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)	
	No treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S
ATCC Gut Microbiome (12 bacteria), R1	<b>95.83</b>	<b>13.63</b>
ATCC Gut Microbiome (12 bacteria), R2	<b>95.88</b>	<b>13.44</b>

## Strong gene expression correlation



- FastSelect removes nearly 90% of all rRNA, and does not alter the expression of genes.

## FastSelect is compatible with the QIAseq Stranded Total RNA Lib Kit

### Other compatible kits:

- TruSeq Stranded (Illumina)
- NEBNext Ultra II Directional (NEB)



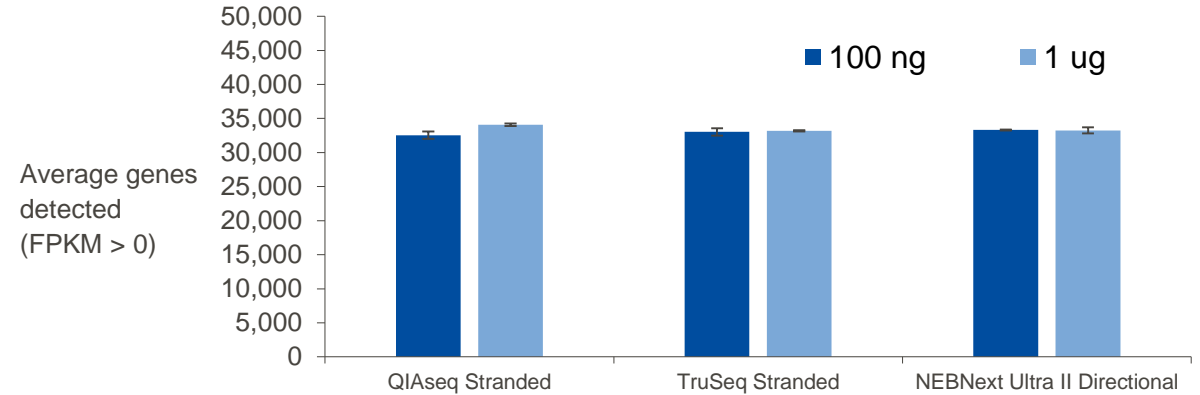
- FastSelect is compatible with most RNA library prep kits.

# FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Robust, reproducible results

## Experimental overview

- Sample: 1 µg and 100 ng, Gut Microbiome Whole Cell Mix
- Depletion: No depletion, FastSelect
- Library prep: QIAseq Stranded, TruSeq Stranded, NEBNext Ultra II Directional
- Sequencing: NextSeq 550
- Mapping: CLC Genomics Workbench

## Genes detected with each stranded kit



## FastSelect substantially removes rRNA, regardless of the RNA library prep kit used

QIAseq Stranded			TruSeq Stranded			NEBNext Ultra II Directional		
Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)		Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)		Sample	Percentage of reads mapped to bacterial rRNA (total)	
	No treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S		No treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S		No treatment	FastSelect – 5S/16S/23S
1 µg	93.28	8.54	1 µg	93.44	19.42	1 µg	93.17	8.55
100 ng	92.46	11.94	100 ng	92.18	24.11	100 ng	92.17	8.83

- FastSelect is compatible with most RNA library prep kits.



# Agenda

Background

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: An introduction

---

FastSelect –5S/16S/23S: Results

---

Summary

---



## FastSelect –5S/16S/23S overview

What is FastSelect –5S/16S/23S? Fragmentation and pan-bacterial (5S/16S/23S) rRNA depletion module

- Number of reactions: 24, 96 and 384

How does it work? Inhibits reverse transcription of its specific targets

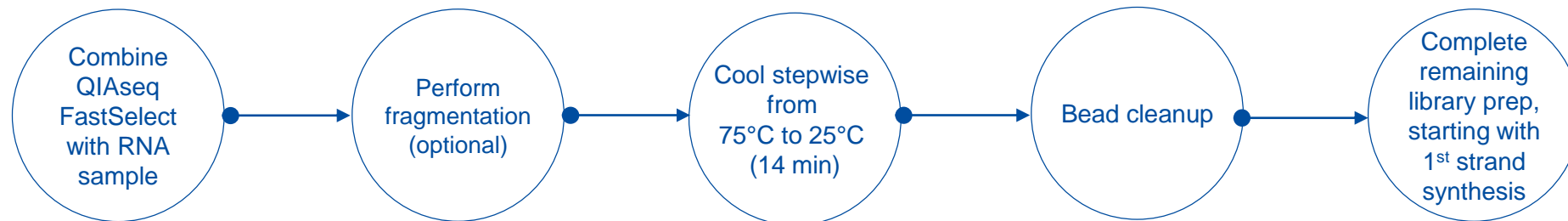
Coverage: Designed to block **community level** cDNA synthesis of 5S, 16S and 23S rRNA

- Designed against SILVA 16S sequences (nearly 600,000 unique entries), SILVA 23S sequences (nearly unique 170,000 entries) and 5S rRNA Database (over 7,200 unique entries)
- Theoretically blocks >95% cDNA synthesis of all 5S, 16S and 23S rRNA sequences

Total RNA input: 20 ng to 1 µg

Kit compatibility: QIAseq Stranded Total RNA Lib Kit (QIAGEN Group), TruSeq Stranded (Illumina, Inc), NEBNext Ultra II Directional (New England Biolabs, Inc)

- FastSelect is compatible with most RNA library prep kits





Thank you for attending  
Questions?

Samuel Rulli, Ph.D.  
[Samuel.Rulli@qiagen.com](mailto:Samuel.Rulli@qiagen.com)