**Supplementary file 1: Bacterial strains.**

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| **Strain** | **Relevant Genotype** | **Source** |
| **MG1655** | F- lambda- ilvG- rfb-50 rph-1 | Blattner, F. R. et al. |
| **BW25113** | F-, Lambda-, ∆(araD-araB)567, lacZ4787(del)::rrnB-3, rph-1, ∆(rhaD-rhaB)568, hsdR514 | Datsenko, K. A. & Wanner, B. L. |
| **bBEL185** | *mlaB::gfp-FRT* | This work |
| **bBEL190**  | *mlaF::FRT* | This work |