

Equivalent concentrations of algae, however, do not necessarily contain equal concentrations of chlorophyll and it would be difficult to ensure that the quantity of photosynthetic pigment for each organism is standard. It would, however, be possible to investigate, qualitatively, whether blue-greens photosynthesise optimally at a different wavelength of light from standard algae. At SSERC, we have successfully grown *Scenedesmus quadricauda*, *Chlorella sp.* (both algae) and *Cynechoccus sp* (Cyanobacteria or blue-greens).

### Appraisal of the kit

Using the SAPS Photosynthesis Kit makes the implementation of practical work with algal balls in the classroom easy. Any materials not supplied in the kit are readily available in schools. Students enjoy making and working with algal balls (Figure 12). They can plan practical work for use with algal balls and investigate a range of factors on the rate of photosynthesis, by observing colour changes caused by differences in levels of CO<sub>2</sub>.



Figure 12 - Cheers! Success at making algal balls.

The kit is provided in a plastic box and brings together some equipment that is not normally available in school laboratories and apparatus whose design has been found to be particularly useful for investigations with algal balls. It also makes available, in quantities practicable for school use, materials that are available for bulk purchase (for example the filters and the Bijou bottles). At £37.50, including postage and packing (£30.00 without P & P), the cost of the kit is significantly less than the sum that would

have to be expended on similar quantities of materials and has the advantage that the principal resources are to hand. The syringes, Bijou bottles and filters are reusable. Details of where to purchase replacement consumables for the practical work are included with the kit. Additional materials required for the practical work are commonplace in schools. The kit provides hardware sufficient for fifteen students or groups to carry out work at one time. However, there is sufficient medium, alginate, hydrogencarbonate indicator and algae when cultured to allow 45 sets of experimental work. Hence the materials within a single Photosynthesis Kit could support 3 x 15 sets of practical work over a short time period. The hardware would, of course, be available for subsequent occasions with only the consumables requiring to be purchased. We consider that the SAPS Photosynthesis Kit represents very good value and is an excellent resource.

Further information and purchases can be obtained from:

SAPS, Homerton College, Hills Road, Cambridge CB2 8PH, Tel: 01223 507168 ; email [saps@homerton.cam.ac.uk](mailto:saps@homerton.cam.ac.uk)

## Revisiting useful friends - now even cheaper

An opportunity has arisen which may benefit microbiology work carried out in schools. This has been made possible through collaboration with Scientific & Chemical Supplies Ltd. and Prestige Medical.

Here we announce an exclusive offer in Scotland where you can purchase an autoclave which we have found to be ideal for use in schools. At SSERC we evaluate equipment received from suppliers to ensure safety and suitability for school use. The Classic 2100 met all criteria regarding pressurised systems (BS3970: Part 4). The results of our tests are available in full detail on the Members part of the SSERC web site (SafetyNet-What's New).

The Model 2100 Classic, which has the Standard Body, can operate at 126 °C for 11 mins. The Extended Body version operates at 121 °C for 15 mins and is specially designed for media. It has temperature and pressure gauges and a thermal jacket. Both models come with instrument tray, basket, lifter and 'V' support. Both standard and extended body versions can be purchased through Scientific & Chemical by quoting the catalogue numbers shown in Table 1 and offer savings of £200 and £300 respectively over the normal catalogue prices.

Contact Scientific & Chemical Supplies Ltd, 39 Back Sneddon Street, Paisley, Renfrewshire PA3 2DE

Telephone: 0141 1887 3531 E Mail: [paisley@scichem.com](mailto:paisley@scichem.com)



Figure 1 - Standard Body autoclave at new price of £465

Catalogue No.	Description	Old Price	New Price
AUT 010 015	Standard Body	£678.57	<b>£465</b>
AUT 010 055	Extended Body 'Plus' Media	£959.18	<b>£640</b>

Table 1 - Standard Body autoclave at new price of £465

"These models provide effective steam sterilisation for educational microbiological work. Prestige Medical autoclaves are easy and convenient to use for both sterilising most media and disposal of microbiological waste. The taller model with the extended body is particularly useful."

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