CARE AND USE OF STIR STIX DISPENSERS:

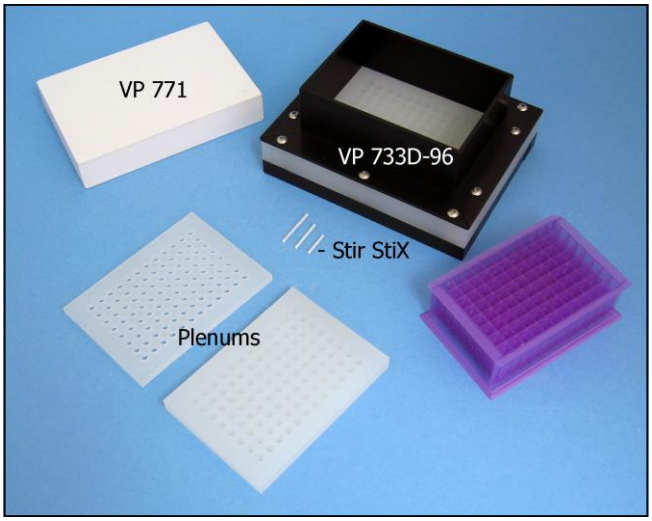

Figure 1

1. These Autoclavable Drop Dispensers are used to place sterile Stir StiX stir elements into microplate wells already filled with liquid. Each dispenser contains 96 ordered holes in a top loading plenum that is an appropriate depth to hold a Stir StiX upright. By adding an additional plenum of various thickness, different lengths of Stir StiXs can be accommodated. The holes in the plenums are just large enough to accommodate one Stir StiX. All drop dispensers include a powerful VP 771 loading magnet.
2. The VP 733D-96 dispenser (shown in Figure 1) contains a top loading plenum that is 22 mm deep. By adding additional plenums that are 6.9 mm and 13.5 mm thick, all three lengths of PTFE encapsulated Stir StiXs (VP 733-2, VP 734-2, and VP 735-2) can be accommodated. The holes in the plenums are just large enough to accommodate one Stir Stix.
3. Dispenser VP 736A loads non-PTFE coated Stir StiX VP 736 and VP 736-1 into 96-well microplates, while VP 737A loads the Stir StiX VP 737, VP 737-1, VP 736, and VP 736-1 by adding an additional plenum. Stir StiX VP 736-1 and Stir StiX VP 737-1 are parylene coated (see Figure 2 below).

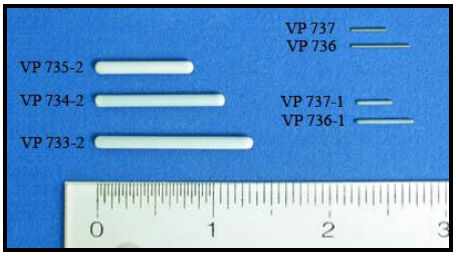

Figure 2

4. The dispenser and Stir StiX can be sterilized by autoclaving or by heating in a hot air oven.
   a. Place Stir StiXs and Stir StiX Dispenser in autoclave and sterilize for 20 minutes. Use rapid exhaust to dry.
   b. Alternatively, sterilize by heating in a hot air oven at 150°C for 1 hour.

5. When Stir StiXs are added to the dispenser they lay down flat and do not enter the plenum holes (Figure 3). The trick is to place the dispenser over a large and very powerful magnetic field (VP 771) which will cause the Stir Sti**X**s to stand on end and then fall down into the holes (Figure 4). Below the top plenum is a bottom plenum also with 96 holes but in the resting condition the two plenums are off-set and will not allow the Stir Sti**X** to pass through.

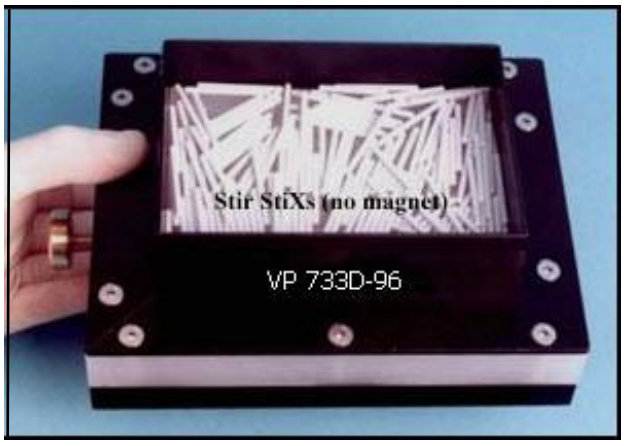

Figure 3

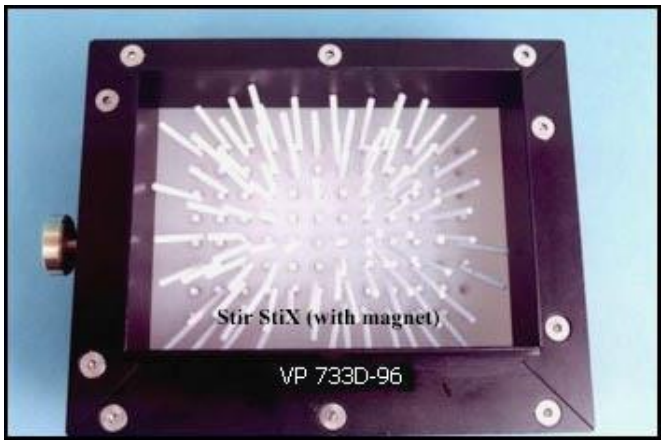

Figure 4

6. Place the dispenser on top of the VP 771 Loading Magnet. Carefully pour about twice the needed number of Stir StiXs into the loading hopper. Vigorously move the dispenser forward and back, left, and right over the magnet until all the holes are filled (Figure 5).

Figure 5

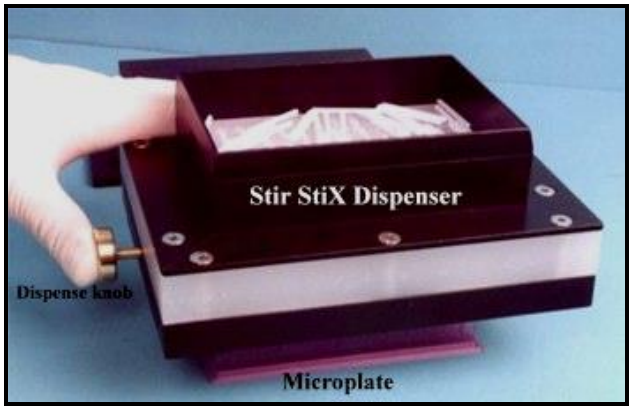

Figure 6

7. When the dispenser is taken off the magnet the remaining unloaded Stir Sti**X**s fall down flat. Move dispenser with Stir StiX loaded in holes to the microwell plate. By pressing on the dispense knob on the side of the dispenser, the hole patterns in the two off-set plenums are aligned vertically and the Stir Sti**X**s drop into the microplate wells beneath. The excess Stir Sti**X**s that are laying flat in the hopper do not interfere with the loading.

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