**Supporting Table 2**

**A. Bacterial strains used in this study**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Strain | Antibiotic selection [μg/ml] | Reference |
| *Herbaspirillum frisingense* GSF30 GFP | Kanamycin50 | Kindly provided by A. Hartmann |
| *Herbaspirillum* B501 GFP | Kanamycin100 | Kindly provided by A. Hartmann |
| *Rhizobium giardinii* 129E RFP | Streptomycin200Gentamycin15 | Kindly provided by M. Roth and P. Schulze-Lefert |
| *Burkholderia* KAW25 | Tetracyclin5 | Kindly provided by K. Minamisawa |
| *Burkholderia* KAW25 GFP | Tetracyclin5 | This work |
| *R. mesosinicum KAW12* | Phosphomycin50 | Kindly provided by K. Minamisawa |
| *R. mesosinicum* KAW12 DsRED | Tetracyclin10, Phosphomycin50 | This work |
| *R.mesosinicum* KAW12 GFP | Tetracyclin10, Phosphomycin50 | This work |
| *R. mesosinicum KAW12 eps1* | Neomycin100 | This work |
| *R. mesosinicum* KAW12 *eps1* DsRED | Tetracyclin10, Neomycin100 | This work |
| *Azorhizobium caulinodans* ORS571-GFP | Carbamycin100, Gentamycin25 | Kindly provided by S. Goormachtig |
| *Mesorhizobium loti* R7A GFP | Tetracyclin2 | Kindly provided by J. Sullivan |
| *Mesorhizobium loti* MAFF 303099 DsRED | Phosphomycin100, Gentamycin10 | Maekawa et al, 2010 |
| *Mesorhizobium loti* R7A *exoU* GFP | Tetracyclin2, Neomycin50 | Kelly et al, 2013 |
| *Mesorhizobium loti* R7A *nodZ* GFP | Kanamycin20 | Rodpothong et al, 2009 |

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**B. Primers used for specific bacterial DNA amplification**

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| Name | Primer sequence |
| *M.loti* *NodC* | 5’ TACTGTTGCCATCTGCTCTT 3’5’ ACCGCTTGATCTTGCATCTT 3’ |
| *M.loti* *NifH* | 5’ ACGGCGCCTATGATAATGTC 3’5’ ATTTGCTCGTCCGTCTTCAT 3’ |
| 16S rRNA | 5’ AGAGTTTGATCCTGGCTCAG 3’5’ AAGGAGGTGATCCAGCC 3’ |
| DsRED | 5’ GGACGTCATCAAGGAGTTCA 3’5’ AAGTTCATCACGCGCTCC 3’ |
| GFP | 5’ TTTTCACTGGAGTTGTCCCA 3’5’ TGCTAGTTGAACGCTTCCAT 3’ |