

# Testingfocus

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## VIRUS CONTAMINATION – an emerging risk?

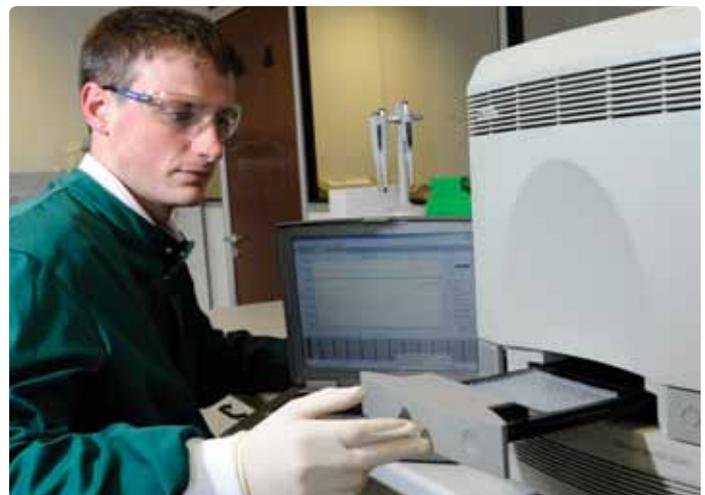
LEAD STORY

Following the FSA targeting Norovirus or ‘winter vomiting virus’ as one of the top six causes of foodborne illnesses, Eurofins is urging the food industry to consider virus testing as part of their overall risk assessment.

Illness caused by the Norovirus is on the increase: in 2010 there were more than 7000 cases reported from hospital labs and GPs in comparison with the year 2000, when only 2000 cases were reported. This is likely to be only the tip of the iceberg due to the complexity of isolating and detecting viruses. Therefore, it is estimated that there are between 400,000 and 1 million cases per year in the UK many of which will be of food or water origin.

The virus is highly infectious because cross contamination and the low level of virus particles required for infection account for the rapid spread of an outbreak. Symptoms will show in 12-48 hours and include vomiting, nausea, diarrhoea and stomach pain and lasts for 2-3 days. The main complication is dehydration which can cause problems for the young, old and immunosuppressed.

“General sources of the Norovirus include shellfish, water, soft fruits and any food touched by infected handlers. The discovery last year



that more than three quarters of British oysters contained the virus highlighted the need for risk assessment and the lack of availability of testing in the UK. At present testing for the Norovirus in foodstuffs is not obligatory, but the FSA is awaiting investigations by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) to decide on regulatory limits for Norovirus in foods, and testing will be more commonplace,” explains Keith Watkins, Microbiology Specialist at Eurofins.

“Eurofins presently offers PCR testing through our partner lab CEERAM, in Nantes but testing is costly and to date UK food manufacturers have been slow on the uptake”, explains Keith. “With the FSA now highlighting Norovirus as a major cause of foodborne illness, we see a move by manufacturers to include the testing as a matter of course. Eurofins plans to offer the service at an attractive price from our laboratory in Wolverhampton as demand increases.”

HELLO

Testingfocus

## Welcome

We enter 2012 building on our successes from last year, with continued growth and investment in both people and resources. One of the key changes during 2012 will be the move to our new purpose built facility just three miles away from our current location. We shall keep you informed of the progress and change of address details.

The structure of the business has also changed with our Public Analyst Services separating into a different company, Public Analyst Scientific Services. At the same time we have changed our name to Eurofins Food Testing UK to bring our title in line with the rest of the Eurofins European business. Our business will still be very much aimed at providing the food and agricultural sectors with the latest testing resources from our laboratories in Wolverhampton and Acton, with the additional benefit of being able to offer specialist testing through the Eurofins' European network.

2012 will be an exciting time for Eurofins Food Testing UK as it expands. We will be revealing more in future issues of Testing Focus!

Best wishes

Liz Paterson, Sales and Marketing Director UK Food  
lizpaterson@eurofins.co.uk

# New Stand-alone Public Analyst Service

PASS

Eurofins Public Analyst Service is the leading service of its kind in the UK and is now a stand-alone entity called Public Analyst Scientific Services (PASS), recognising the specific requirements of the enforcement authorities and the reassurance of impartial interpretation of the testing results.

Liz Moran, Public Analyst explains the benefits "The PASS team is focussed specifically on the requirements of the enforcement authorities. At this time, when budgets are being squeezed, the authorities require advice to ensure that their budgets are being targeted effectively to protect the consumer. Our impartial advice is based on legislation and analytical test results.

Our job is to express opinion about the outcome of test results in terms of compliance and non-compliance with applicable legal requirements as well as acting as expert witnesses in court proceedings. It is therefore important that we are seen to be independent and impartial."



The new stand-alone PASS team

PASS is an eight-strong team of experienced chemists, all with the M-Chem-A qualification required by legislation for Public Analysts.

For more information on Public Analyst Scientific Services telephone 0845 600 9004 or visit [www.publicanalystservices.co.uk](http://www.publicanalystservices.co.uk)

# New Labelling Regulations

NEW REGS

The new Food Information Regulation (EC regulation 1169/2011) which has just come into force is all about making labelling more consumer friendly. This of course could mean some significant changes for food manufacturers.

As a result manufacturers may have to increase product testing, or test where they haven't before and of course make changes to packaging design and copy as a result. For some brand owners this would mean considerable cost implications.

Although wide ranging, key points of the FIR include:

Provenance of fresh and frozen meat is uppermost and there is a requirement for more specific detail about the origin of food, not just where the ingredients are from but also where the final product is made.

Nutritional information is now required for most foods with the option of simplified information

additionally provided on the front of pack (voluntary).

Despite the fact labels must carry more detail, they must remain clear to read and so a minimum font size has been set for all mandatory details.

Allergen information must now be included on all pre-packed for direct sale and loose foods as included in the ingredients list on pre-packed foods.

High caffeine drinks will have to carry additional warning labels such as 'not recommended for children'.

Formed joints of meat and fish which contain more than 5% added water will have to be declared and types of vegetable must be stated

such as in the case of palm oil.

"Many of the changes in the Food Information Regulation are subtle, but the impact on food manufacturers could be far reaching. Even small details, such as text on a pack being a minimum font size means that potentially packs will have to be re-designed and reprinted at a cost. The PASS Team can advise customers on what the new regulations mean for them in terms of any changes they may need to make to their current testing and how the facts are communicated to consumers on-pack to meet the new legislation," explains Public Analyst Liz Moran.

This topic is covered in the Eurofins Basic Nutritional Labelling course.

# Eurofins Nantes Tests for Olive Oil Authenticity

TEST

Eurofins' Authenticity Competence Centre based in Nantes undertakes product verification, a service which is offered throughout the network of Eurofins' laboratories. One of the foodstuffs which undergoes testing to ensure accurate geographical labelling is Virgin and Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

Eric Jamin from Eurofins Analytics, France explains:

"EC Regulation 182/2009, states that labelling for Olive Oil must display one of the following three types of information, depending on the claimed production area:

- At country level, the member state or third country;
- In the case of blends, either 'community', 'non-community' or 'community and non-community' olive oils
- At regional level, 'a protected designation of origin or a protected geographical indication'

Intensive research work over the last decade in the field of stable isotope characterisation of olive oil can be applied as an efficient



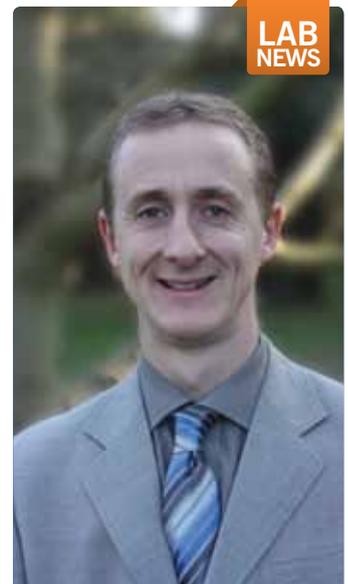
analytical tool to help enforce the traceability information required by law.

This analytical approach is not designed to determine an oil of unknown origin, but is a powerful tool for the confirmation of

the declared origin, especially for products with a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO)".

For more information on Olive Oil and other product authenticity testing contact [sales@eurofins.co.uk](mailto:sales@eurofins.co.uk)

LAB NEWS



## Retail Team Expands

Louis Jeffs has returned to Eurofins as Analytical Services Manager (Retail) after having started his career in food testing with the organisation 19 years ago. After working within the Eurofins' trace elements, soils and pesticides departments he worked for several years with Exova's food nutrition, food analytical and sample preparation and laboratory auditing teams gaining significant experience in the requirements for both retailers and manufacturers.

In the Retail team Louis will be the point of contact between the retail customer and the range of services available from Eurofins worldwide. His role will be to manage a retailer's business, from advising on relevant testing and legislation, reporting and interpretation of test results against both specifications and legal limits through to shopping for samples in-store and general account management.

# Popular Training Continues

TRAINING

Following on from the success of training courses in February covering the 'hot topics' facing the food industry today, Eurofins Food Testing UK will be hosting three more training sessions at Wolverhampton in April 2012:

### 19th April – Pesticide Residues

This half day course is designed to give an overview of the latest pesticide residue analysis and legislation. Ideal for technical managers new to dealing with pesticide results or more experienced personnel requiring a refresher, the session will include the pesticide development cycle; legislation; MRLs and the latest analysis methods.

### 25th April – Microbiology

This session is ideal for technical staff and managers new to microbiology and will cover the basic principles of microbiology, microbiology in factory settings and microbiology and laboratories. This informative full day session includes a laboratory tour.

### 26th April – Basic Nutritional Labelling

The latest course in the Eurofins' training portfolio, this full day course covers general labelling requirements, nutrition labelling, nutrition testing in the laboratory and the implications of the new Food Information Regulation. Ideal for technical managers or NPD teams new to nutritional labelling or for those requiring a refresher.

Sessions are free of charge to existing clients. Charges may apply for new clients and additional delegates. For more information and to book a place see [www.eurofins.co.uk](http://www.eurofins.co.uk) or email [RachelBurley@eurofins.co.uk](mailto:RachelBurley@eurofins.co.uk)

## News from the Agriculture Team



# Workshop Delegates See the Value of Muck

SEMINAR NEWS

There was an impressive turnout for the Eurofins' 'Muck' workshop on 13th December with 24 farmers, growers and agriculture consultants finding out about the importance of testing manure and slurry for nutrient content to improve crop yield and cut costs.

As well as speakers from JSR Farms and ADAS UK, Eurofins demonstrated a new method of rapid testing via Near Infra-Red Spectrometry (NIRS) suitable for solid and semi-solid materials to test for dry matter, total nitrogen, ammonium nitrogen, phosphate,

potash, magnesium and sulphur. NIRS gives consistent results, more cost effectively and quicker to give farmers and growers an accurate picture of their nutrient applications. One delegate even brought manure with him to the session for a practical demonstration! ❄️

# Easier Test Access with New Web Portal

WEB PORTAL

Eurofins has launched a new on-line portal [www.agriculturaltesting.co.uk](http://www.agriculturaltesting.co.uk) to offer easier access to agricultural product testing services for farmers and growers.

The service enables farmers to register analytical tests for products including soils, organic materials such as livestock manures, silages and feedstuffs on-line, select the analysis required and pay by credit card. There is no minimum order

required or time consuming account set up.

Test results are turned around rapidly within 3-5 days, subject to the analysis required and are delivered by email direct to the farmer.

Andrew Scott, Agricultural Business Unit Manager from Eurofins said: "Good analysis gives farmers the confidence to make decisions about inputs onto their land that can save time and



money. Eurofins has more than 40 years' experience in the agricultural sector through its ADAS pedigree and provides farmers with rapid, independent tests they can trust." ❄️

# Team Welcomes Agriculture Expert

NEW FACE

The agricultural testing services division of Eurofins UK has appointed specialist Steve Croxton as Agricultural Business Development Executive. Steve has a background in independent agronomy and renewable energy.

Liz Paterson, Sales and Marketing

Director from Eurofins said: "Steve's extensive experience in new business development combined with his technical knowledge will be a major asset to Eurofins' expanding agricultural offer and we are delighted to welcome him to the business." ❄️



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