

Testingfocus

EUROFINS FOOD GROUP NEWSLETTER | ISSUE 2 • WINTER 2010

CONTENTS

PAGE 2

A closer look at 'lean thinking'

New highly specific DNA test for fish identification

PAGE 3

Eurofins allergens expertise sets industry agenda

Eurofins partners with Central Europe experts on labelling and testing projects

Rapid tests secure UKAS accreditation

PAGE 4

An overview of our Public Analyst service

Eurofins introduces new customer service initiatives

Eurofins contaminants section responds to market with extended pesticide scope

LEAD STORY

Recognised as one of the leading pesticide residue testing laboratories in Europe, Eurofins is at the forefront of latest developments in the pesticide sector and is continually developing its methods to offer customers access to rapid product testing.

The company's centre at Wolverhampton is leading the field with investment in the latest technology and will be adding another 200 compounds to its existing multi-residue testing package, ready for the introduction of new pesticide legislation in June 2011.

"Pesticide residues is a fast moving area as retailers respond to consumer concerns about food provenance", explains Anthony Rigby, Business Unit Manager Food Chemistry and Contaminants at Eurofins.

"Eurofins leads the market and has invested in both technology and expertise to offer customers an unrivalled access to the latest testing and industry insight."

Earlier this year Eurofins' UK clients also benefited from the company's worldwide network of laboratories when the non-permitted additive morpholine

in wax was discovered on fresh fruit for sale in the UK. Eurofins was one of the few laboratory groups worldwide to offer fully accredited testing for morpholine from its "Centre of Excellence" in Germany.

“ Eurofins leads the market and has invested in both technology and expertise to offer customers an unrivalled access to the latest testing and industry insight. ”

"Although exposure to morpholine at the level detected in the fruit is likely to be of low risk to consumers, the additive is banned in the UK but permitted in various countries outside the EU and has come into the food chain recently via apples from Chile," explains Anthony Rigby



"Food business operators have been advised by the FSA that products with any trace of morpholine should not be on sale in the UK, so testing to ensure that it is not present is now essential. As the only accredited laboratory for this type of testing, Eurofins is able to offer customers results they can rely on to meet their legal obligations." 

HELLO

Testingfocus



Welcome

Welcome to the second issue of Testing Focus, In a market that remains fast moving and highly competitive, Eurofins has been able to respond due to its sound reputation in the market and flexibility to meet clients' needs.

With the introduction of 'lean processing' (see David Neal's article), we have been able to increase our capacity while controlling our costs. This demonstrates our commitment to ongoing development and we welcome your feedback.

Eurofins' international presence is one of our major strengths not only in providing local testing solutions but also in advising of legislation and labelling. On page 3 we outline how our colleagues in Central Europe are working with us to provide a more comprehensive service.

As another year draws to a close we are making exciting plans for 2011 with more seminars and briefing sessions, so watch out for your next issue of Testing Focus to keep you up to date.

Liz Paterson, Sales and Marketing Director UK Food
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On the spot... A look at lean thinking

In the first issue of Testing Focus, we unveiled how Eurofins' Wolverhampton laboratory has successfully applied 'lean thinking' to its operations as part of a commitment to provide best value to customers. David Neal is Eurofins' Business Improvement Manager who has given us a quick insight into what it means to be 'lean':

What are the principles behind 'lean thinking'?

The main principle behind what we do at Wolverhampton is, in a nutshell, the ruthless elimination of waste from the operational process without impacting on the technical integrity of the testing. We look at all areas from back office functions to customer facing operations.

How can lean principles be applied in a laboratory setting?

They can be applied in any setting, as waste is everywhere whether it is time, materials or as simple as the effective layout of the lab. Lean is relatively new in the

laboratory sector. We saw the potential of how it could improve our business and have applied the model to our own requirements.

What challenges did you find in implementing lean at Wolverhampton?

As with any major change there is always a certain amount of reluctance to change and some cynicism in the projected results. However, once the lean process was underway and staff could see tangible benefits, both in ways of working and results to customers, everyone has embraced the concept. It's now a natural way of working.

What are the benefits of this way of working both for staff and customers?

Implementing a more focussed approach to business has delivered increased capacity to support organic growth plans as well as underpinning Eurofins' commitment to quality. We have faster turnaround times – essential in today's fast moving food industry – a multi-skilled, crossed trained workforce and a proven path to profitable growth.

Lean is a 'win-win' formula for staff and customers alike. 🌟

ON THE SPOT



Speedy route to fish species

RAPID TEST

Eurofins has introduced a highly specific and sensitive rapid DNA test method for reliable identification of fish species in food products, with results in less than 24 hours from sample receipt.

Reliable species testing is now essential following introduction of fish labelling regulations in 2003 and amended in 2010, which state that food products containing fish must stipulate the species of fish used. Testing not only ensures regulatory compliance but also guards against fraudulent or accidental inclusion of mislabelled species. Rapid testing, which cuts



almost 24 hours off the standard time for species testing means that fresher products can be on the shelf in a shorter space of time.

Eurofins Wolverhampton can offer rapid testing using an extensively validated and robust method produced by Agilent Technologies, allowing high-quality repeatable results.

This method exploits minor differences in DNA sequence between different fish species and fragments are compared with a large authenticated database of fish species to ensure accurate species identification.

For more information contact us on 0845 604 6740 or email sales@eurofins.co.uk. 🌟



Allergens expertise sets industry agenda

LAB TEST

EU regulation which requires that certain allergenic ingredients and derivatives are clearly labelled on pre-packed food has been in place for some time now. Eurofins allergen testing experts have been at the forefront of advising the food industry on where to set the thresholds for allergen levels in food.

Rob Limburn, Allergens & Authenticity Manager at Eurofins Laboratories explains:

"There has been a rise in allergic reactions to food, with some 4% of adults and 8% of children having a food intolerance or allergy of some form. While testing for the 'big eight' main allergens has been in place for some time, the introduction of maximum thresholds and action levels for food allergens

has been intensely debated across the EU. The intention is that these thresholds will help industry protect its customers and regulators to enforce the legislation".

Eurofins has been actively contributing to the technical debate on thresholds and as a result is able to offer clients unrivalled insight into the latest developments as well as in-depth understanding of the appropriate testing. 🌐

Rapid tests secure UKAS accreditation

RAPID TEST

In the last issue of Testing Focus, we reported on the introduction of new rapid tests for *Salmonella* and *Cronbacter sakazakii* at Eurofins, which can save up to 24 hours awaiting results to release product. We are delighted that both tests have secured UKAS accreditation.

Both tests use a Pathatrix instrument which, combined with a real time PCR test allows rapid screening of samples and a considerable rapid turn-round time for results. UKAS accreditation is the stamp of approval which gives clients the re-assurance of the robustness of the test method 🌐

Eurofins UK cooperates with Central Europe to provide a comprehensive service

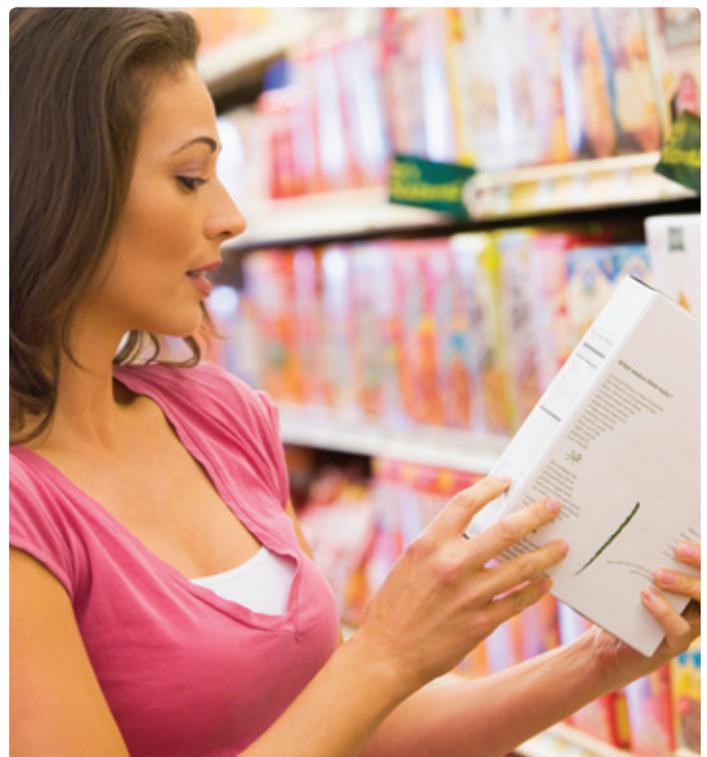
RETAIL FOCUS

As part of increased presence by UK retailers in Central Europe and more products from that part of the globe being available in the UK, Eurofins has been working closely with sister company Bel Novamann on a number of food testing and labelling projects. Liz Paterson, Sales and Marketing Director UK Food at Eurofins explains:

"Many companies are expanding fast in central Europe meaning a requirement for product label checking and testing to ensure compliance. Although the legislation is harmonised across Europe, often there are local interpretation requirements. Direct translation can often miss the subtleties of language so our colleagues at Bel Novamann, with their extensive experience in the Polish, Slovakian and Czech food markets have been undertaking label checking for UK products destined for central Europe. Bel Novamann's food laboratories

have also been working on extensive tests on products being exported to the UK to support British retailers and manufacturers expanding their central European food offering.

"With eight laboratories in Austria, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary, Bel Novamann has a strong presence in central Europe and is well experienced in the needs of the major European retailers. Undertaking label checking and product testing locally means considerable time and cost savings for UK retailers and manufacturers." 🌐



Eurofins leads with UK PA service

PUBLIC ANALYST

Eurofins offers the leading Public Analyst service in the UK, with a six-strong team of experienced chemists, all with the M Chem A qualification required by Public Analysts, who provide analytical services and impartial expert opinion to Councils across the UK.

Ron Ennion at Eurofins explains the unique role of the PA:

"Metropolitan Councils, County Councils or District Councils have a duty under the Food Safety Act 1990 to appoint an independent Public Analyst who can receive samples for analysis by authorised officers of the council (either Trading Standards Officers or Environmental Health Officers). We are also authorised as Agricultural Analysts by the same councils for analysis of fertilisers and feeding stuffs, and can also be asked to

analyse other types of samples such as consumer products or environmental samples. It is the job of the PA to express opinion about the outcome of test results in terms of compliance and non-compliance with applicable legal requirements. We are often called upon to act as expert witnesses in court proceedings too."

"Within Eurofins, the PA function operates as a separate business unit offering regional coverage from offices in Wolverhampton, Acton, Belfast, Norwich and Hull. This organisation eliminates any

potential conflict of interest with the food testing business but utilises the same laboratory methods ensuring consistency of results."

"The team of PAs based at Eurofins can offer advice to the private sector as well, allowing customers access to impartial advice, based on legislation and analytical test results. As legislation becomes even more complex having accurate test facilities to hand is essential. Coupled with the full range of analytical techniques and advice offered by the PAs, Eurofins is able to offer customers a highly effective way of achieving their regulatory obligations."

For more information on Eurofins' Public Analyst Service contact Eurofins UK on 0845 604 6740

'Added value' customer service

ADDED VALUE

Free Briefing Sessions Launched for Pesticides and Microbiology

Eurofins hosted free training sessions in November on the Basic Principles of Microbiology and Rapid Microbiological Methods as well as the latest in legislation relating to Pesticide Residue Analysis.

Liz Paterson said 'Uptake for the sessions was excellent and we are

planning more briefing sessions in 2011. With both technology and legislation moving at a fast pace it is essential that technologists and technical managers keep up to date with the latest developments. The Pesticide Residue session qualifies for BASIC points and we issue certificates of attendance so that participants can add them to

their training record or Continuous Professional Development schemes. We will be expanding the range of sessions available in 2011.

If you would like to go on the mailing list to be updated on forthcoming events please contact Mary Horesh on MaryHoresh@eurofins.co.uk

Up to Speed with New Information Update

Eurofins has recently launched an Information Update programme to keep customers up to date with the latest news and regulation changes that may affect their business.

Customers can opt for a regulatory update which includes topical food or food-related

articles collated from various sources into one easy to access format. We are planning a rolling programme to highlight the latest issues to customers, the first of which is the Pesticide Residue Update which has recently been issued. The update features links to Pesticide Residue news articles, European and UK regulations and

Relevant Rapid Alert System for Food and Feed (RASSF). Eurofins is also offering a General Information Update with the latest news and regulations affecting our customers.

If you would like to receive regular updates from Eurofins, please contact Mary Horesh on MaryHoresh@eurofins.co.uk



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