

PRESS RELEASE

BELGIAN PASTEURISATION TECHNOLOGY KILLS AVIAN INFLUENZA IN SHELL EGGS

DEURNE, 3 MARCH 2004 – POLLUX, THE PROFESSIONAL KITCHEN SHELL EGGS PASTEURISATION APPLIANCE BY LEDA TECHNOLOGIES, IS CAPABLE OF ELIMINATING THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN SHELL EGGS. THIS CONCLUSION IS BASED ON INFORMATION THE BELGIAN INTELLIGENT FOOD SAFETY EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURER RECEIVED FROM THE US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Over the past few years, avian influenza (AI) has left its marks throughout the world. Countries and regions presently suffering the consequences include East Asia and the United States. The disease has led to the imposition of severe import restrictions on Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Pakistan, China, South Korea, Thailand and Vietnam. At the end of February, as AI had surfaced in Texas, the EU halted all poultry related imports from the United States. Last year's AI epidemic in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany led to the cull of 30 million chicken. Several dozens of people have died in the AI epidemics of the last few years. Hence, the EU says: "Avian Influenza is a very serious disease of poultry and it appears more and more frequently all over the world. The recent spread in the bird population in Asia is unprecedented (1)."

AI may be spread through shell eggs. That is why Leda Technologies, the Belgian manufacturer of intelligent food safety equipment, investigated whether Pollux, its professional kitchen appliance that eliminates the risk of Salmonella food outbreaks linked with shell eggs, is also capable of killing the highest levels of Avian Influenza viruses in shell eggs.

Leda Technologies requested the US Department of Agriculture's Dr David Swayne, Laboratory Director of the Agricultural Research Service's Southeast Poultry Research Laboratory to provide scientific data allowing Leda Technologies to determine whether its shell egg pasteurisation technology would also be capable of eliminating the highest pathogenic AI without affecting the shell eggs' other characteristics or properties. Dr Swayne is a world authority on AI and has widely published on the disease. Based on data provided by Dr Swayne, Leda Technologies safely deduces that its technology is capable of totally eliminating the highest AI known concentrations (± 80.000 H5N2 viruses per ml of egg).

"This shows again what our technology is capable of", says Stijn De Preter, Leda Technologies' Communication Manager. "Food business operators who are using Pollux are not only protected against food outbreaks caused by Salmonella enteritidis in shell eggs, but also against Avian Influenza outbreaks. In addition, we are confident that after some significant research and development work, it our technology can be adapted to industrial scale. That would allow egg producers to offer Salmonella and AI free shell eggs for retail without affecting their nutritional values, cooking properties or other characteristics."

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More information:

Stijn De Preter
Communication Manager
Leda Technologies
Middelmolenlaan 108, B-2100 Deurne, Belgium
Tel: +32 3 328 00 90
Fax: +32 3 328 00 91
Gsm: +32 498 75 31 91

Reference:

- (1) http://europa.eu.int/comm/health/ph_threats/com/Influenza/avian_influenza_en.htm