

PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DEURNE, ANTWERP, 19 MARCH 2004 – LEDA TECHNOLOGIES, THE BELGIAN INTELLIGENT FOOD SAFETY PRODUCT MANUFACTURER, WELCOMES THE FOOD SAFETY AGENCY'S FINDINGS THAT BRITISH EGGS ARE LESS LIKELY CONTAMINATED WITH SALMONELLA THAN NINE YEARS AGO. HOWEVER, ONE IN 290 TO 1.740 EGGS IS STILL LIKELY TO BE CONTAMINATED WITH SALMONELLA.

There can be no doubt that the Food Standards Agency's study into the level of Salmonella contamination levels of shell eggs in retail is excellent news to consumers. The study shows that contamination levels have dropped from one in every 100 boxes in 1995 to one in 290 boxes in 2003. This success is largely due to the egg producers' vaccination program. Given the fact that the UK annual per capita egg consumption stands at about 174 eggs, the risk of being infected with Salmonella has dropped well below one incident per year. The FSA's results are in line with data from the Netherlands, where egg producers run a similar laying hen vaccination program. The FSA, however, rightly warns that "eggs cannot be guaranteed to be salmonella-free, whatever the source or type. This is particularly important for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, babies and toddlers, pregnant women, and people who are already unwell and more vulnerable to infection."

Food business operators (FBO) will read the FSA study results with different eyes, as their business' success and survival depends on preventing food infections. Given the fact that the FSA pooled each box of 6 eggs before testing for Salmonella, the real infection risk is one in 290 to 1,740 eggs. If a FBO were to prepare a chocolate mousse for a party of 300 people, anything between 240 and 300 egg whites should be pooled. One contaminated egg white is sufficient to spoil the entire dessert. Hence, the statistical contamination risk linked with a 300 people chocolate mousse ranges from absolute certainty (1.25 contaminated eggs) to 7.25 to 1.

Leda Technologies offers a holistic solution to those FBO's who prefer not to compromise on food safety and food quality. Its main kitchen appliance, Pollux, is capable of removing even the highest Salmonella contamination levels with shell eggs without affecting their composition, nutritional value or cooking properties. In addition, Pollux is also capable of pasteurising and cooking shell eggs to perfection in one process with a maximum of convenience. Pollux thus enables FBO's to use shell eggs in potentially dangerous dishes such as mayonnaise, chocolate mousse, tiramisu, sabayon, fried eggs and soft to medium cooked eggs.

ENDS

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