

Update

READING SCIENTIFIC SERVICES LIMITED

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2010

Industry analysts tell us that the food sector has remained resilient against recession which is great news for everyone. We work in an exciting and constantly developing arena. 2009 continued to be a year of investment for RSSL. We added several new services including basmati rice authenticity, fish and mollusc allergens and GM linseed detection to our portfolio.



Jacinta George
Commercial Director

There will be interesting developments in the coming year with topics such as 'natural' ingredients, health claims, allergens and packaging remaining high on the agenda. RSSL has a vibrant development plan in place for 2010 with new skills, knowledge and expertise continuing to enhance our capabilities to stay at the forefront of science. Already, we have a new LC-MS, NMR and further enhancements to our Results Online system in place. If you have a specific development need please do contact us.

RSSL has always prided itself on the relationships we have with you, our customers, and we are looking to increasing our partnerships further in 2010. Our problem solving abilities have assisted many of you in resolving business critical issues, and to enhance this we have appointed David Brown as our new Investigative Partner. David will be available to work with you as a partner providing hands-on quality and process improvement support, and we look forward to introducing him to you.

I wish you continued success in the coming year and look forward to working with you and meeting you at our roadshows.

With kindest regards



Out on the road

We will be hosting another series of our popular roadshows during 2010, starting in Daventry on 17 and 18 March. We start with 'Resolving Product Contamination Issues' on the Wednesday and follow this with 'Allergens in a Nutshell' on the Thursday. To find out more about both of these events, and for roadshows planned in the rest of the year, please contact **Lorraine on 0118 7294027 or email Lorraine.ma.povey@rssl.com**

Problem solvERS

During the past year our Emergency Response Service (ERS) investigated a staggering 768 incidents. That meant an average of more than two priority investigations per day, on top of our routine work.

"The volume of work for the ERS can largely be explained by a growing customer base," says Karen Masters, who heads the ERS. "Many customers appreciate the priority service that membership provides, and whenever there is an urgent need for test results, they know they can rely on the ERS for the quickest answers."

As always, the range of problems investigated by the ERS was incredibly varied, but as ever, our chemistry labs were frequently called on to explain taints and off-flavours, while our foreign body identification service was especially busy in 2009.

Our expertise and experience in investigating and identifying foreign bodies is unrivalled, and our status was reinforced last year by several hundred ERS investigations carried out by our microscopy laboratory. This was in addition, of course, to the other work of the lab, such as carrying out structural investigations of food products.



Foreign bodies

It is a feature of many foreign body investigations that first appearances can be deceptive. What looks like one thing to the human eye is often shown to be something else by more thorough investigation. So there is a wide range of clever techniques that we use to distinguish between the various fragments of glass, plastic, paper and metal, as well as a bewildering array of precipitates, powders, animal body parts and secretions, fibres and hairs, that somehow get into food products.



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science with service

Taints

Investigations of taints and off-flavours often start with the most powerful of detectors, the human nose. But once our chemists have a hold on the problem, it is down to the labs for some serious science to extract, isolate and identify the offending chemicals. With some taints caused by chemicals present at very low levels (below one part per billion) it is always a challenge to come up with the right answer. However, we do not just stop at telling our customers what is there. When asked, we will try to go even further, tracing the taint all the way back through the supply chain to its original source.



Getting the better of B12

At RSSL, we are committed to developing the quickest, most sensitive and most accurate analytical methods. Our Functional Ingredients laboratory has just added analysis of vitamin B12 to a growing list of ingredients that we can quantify using the cutting edge technology of UPLC-MS (ultra performance liquid chromatography - mass spectrometry.)

It is a small but significant step given that B12 is notoriously difficult to measure accurately by other means. But this is just the start. We will be adding UPLC-MS methods for other vitamins and functional ingredients very shortly.

"UPLC-MS is a big step forward," says Marta Ahijado Fernandez, recently appointed as Laboratory Manager for RSSL's Functional Ingredients laboratory. *"In routine analysis and especially in investigative analysis, this technology gives us a much clearer picture of the different chemical compounds present in our food."*

Competition

14 allergenic ingredients have been identified for declaration on product labels to comply with Directive 2003/89/EC.

These are: Celery, Crustaceans, Egg, Fish, Lupin, Milk, Molluscs, Mustard, Peanuts, Sesame, Soya, Sulphites, Tree Nuts and Wheat.

Which of these 14 allergens are regularly found 'hidden' in the following products:

1. Wine 2. Marzipan 3. Sausage

Email your answers to foodcompetition@rssl.com by 30 March 2010.

All correct entries will be placed in a prize draw for a bottle of champagne. The winner will be notified and the correct answer will be sent to all entrants by email.

What happens next?

Finding out that a product or ingredient is contaminated or otherwise compromised is never good news. It may mean making quick decisions about a recall, withdrawal or re-work. Longer term, it might also signal some fundamental flaw in a process or procedure that needs to be addressed.



"There may be an obvious, immediate response to an incident, such as shutting down production, or destroying a particular batch," says David Brown, recently appointed as our Investigative Partner for the food and beverage industries. *"But every incident that leads to an out-of-specification test result in our laboratories says something about a lack of control. That is why we want to give our customers more guidance on how to prevent problems, and to provide support in process improvement."*

As former head of corporate governance and risk management compliance across Diageo's Asia Pacific region, David knows what it takes to get it right, and is excited about the prospect of helping those of our customers who are in need of extra support. He has vast experience of introducing process, risk management, environmental and quality improvements in a wide range of food/drink production facilities, including those operated by third party manufacturers and suppliers. He is also skilled at training in topics such as HACCP, auditing and food safety. David is a Lead Auditor who can assess any site against ISO standards through to your own high FMCG internal standards.

"Helping suppliers and contractors to meet the standards required of them is massively important," he says. *"It's not enough just to insist on compliance, you need to work with suppliers and understand their challenges in order to develop processes and procedures that work. That applies right across the board, whether we are talking about quality and process improvement, addressing problems in food safety and HACCP, implementing risk management and business continuity or ISO 9000 or ISO 14000 standards."*

RSSL's Services

Allergen Testing	Functional Foods
Claim Substantiation	In-House Training
Consultancy	Physical Properties
Contamination Investigation	Product & Ingredient Innovation
Emergency Response Service	Taint & Flavour Investigation
Foreign Body Identification	

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