

PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab Introduces Antimicrobial Product That Helps Improve Safety of Ready-to-Eat Meats

ST. PAUL, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--June 23, 2006-- Ecolab Inc. announced the introduction of Octa-Gone™, the first fatty acid-based antimicrobial product on the market that reduces microbial contamination on ready-to-eat (RTE) meat and poultry products. The product has a proven 2 or greater log reduction of *Listeria monocytogenes*, a pathogen which can cause foodborne illness.

"Octa-Gone provides an extra layer of food safety protection for our customers," says John Tengwall, vice president of Food & Beverage at Ecolab. Octa-Gone utilizes a unique application point that applies the product at the last possible moment in the packaging process, virtually eliminating the possibility of post-treatment recontamination.

"The value of this product to our industry cannot be stressed enough," says Tengwall. "Octa-Gone is cost-effective and simple to apply. It's effective against microbial pathogens without affecting the color, flavor or appearance of the RTE meat product, and it's approved as a processing aid by the USDA, therefore no additive labeling is required for processors. It's a revolutionary product that is going to change the way RTE manufacturers run their packaging lines."

All raw meats are susceptible to bacteria and pathogens, which is why they are cooked before consumption. Ready-to-eat products, like deli and luncheon meats, are prepared at a processing plant and undergo a cooking step that kills any pathogens present. However, through the handling or transporting of the product to the final packaging area, the ready-to-eat meats are susceptible to recontamination. The key to Octa-Gone, according to Tengwall, is the timing of when it's applied. Octa-Gone is applied directly into packaging bags immediately before ready-to-eat meats are placed inside and sealed. The packaged and sealed product is then sent through a hot water shrink tunnel, tightening the package and spreading the Octa-Gone treatment over the entire surface of the RTE product.

Octa-Gone was also designed for ease of implementation. "When adopting the new Octa-Gone product into their plants, Ecolab customers gain access to the 24-hour, 7-day-a-week technical support and service that the company is known for in the food and beverage processing industry," explains Tengwall. "We are excited to bring this innovation to consumers by assisting our customers through the entire process of implementation to application."

Octa-Gone is not for use to sanitize hard food contact surfaces such as tanks, lines, food processing equipment, or to treat microbial contamination in processing water, or on food packaging.

With 2005 sales of \$4.5 billion, Ecolab is the leading global developer and marketer of premium cleaning, sanitizing, pest elimination, maintenance and repair products and services for the hospitality, foodservice, healthcare and industrial markets.

Ecolab shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol ECL. Ecolab news releases and other investor information are available on the Internet at <http://www.ecolab.com>.

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