

PRESS RELEASES

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Ecolab Launches "Why Clean Matters" Campaign

Independent Research Finds Restaurant Cleanliness is Most Important Attribute to Consumers

CHICAGO--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Ecolab Inc. today launched its "Why Clean Matters" awareness campaign at the National Restaurant Association (NRA) Show in Chicago with the goal of sharing new research and insight from chefs and industry experts about the impact cleanliness has on restaurant performance. Cleanliness tied with food taste as the most important attribute in choosing a restaurant, according to surveys of 13,000 restaurant consumers by Technomic, a leading foodservice research firm.

"Having clean tableware is the most important thing for us. It shows guests we care and want them to have a positive experience," said Anthony Leonardi, executive chef, Salut Bar Americain. "All of my hard work in the kitchen goes out the window if the dishware I'm plating on didn't get clean on the first pass through the dishwasher. That dish – along with the filet mignon on it – is coming back to the kitchen."

Two Consumer Restaurant Brand Metrics trend studies conducted by Technomic in 2010 and Q1 2011 asked consumers to rate performance at leading restaurant chains on experience attributes. The surveys found that cleanliness consistently ranked as one of the most important attributes. Key insights included:

- Cleanliness of tableware (dishes, glasses, silverware) consistently was ranked as the most important attribute to full service customers – with 93 percent saying it is their top attribute.
- Interior cleanliness ranked as the second most important attribute, tying with food temperature in the 2010 survey responses.
- There was a positive correlation between chains with the highest cleanliness ratings and loyalty factors such as "intent to return" and "recommend to others."

"Partnering with Ecolab has been a big benefit to us in making sure that we maintain our safety standards. But it's not just about the standard itself, it's also about the method by which we maintain those standards," said Chef Lenny Russo, executive chef and owner, Heartland. "Heartland goes to great lengths to make sure we have as little impact on the environment as possible – Ecolab is an integral piece of that by making sure that the products that we buy from them have as little environmental impact as possible but also provide the highest amount of safety."

"As restaurant operators struggled through the economic downturn, many understandably looked at cost-cutting opportunities in the back of the house, sometimes without realizing the importance that guests placed on clean glasses and tableware," said Nicolas Granucci, vice president of Foodservice Marketing at Ecolab. "We're always looking for ways to help restaurant owners and managers deliver a clean and safe experience for their guests. For example, our Apex® Conveyor dishmachine and the Ecolab Cleaning Caddy received the prestigious 2011 Kitchen Innovation Award for their ability to increase cleanliness, productivity and environmental sustainability in foodservice operations."

"Cleanliness is the most important thing – from our guest's perspective when they open up the silverware and see sparkling silver, that sends a message to them that we're focused on the details," said Chef John Metz of Marlow's Tavern." The process that Ecolab has helped us develop at Marlowe's – the value for us is first and foremost that the guest never sees a piece of dirty silverware."

To view videos of chefs sharing their stories on Why Clean Matters and learn more about the Technomic research, visit www.WhyCleanMatters.com or stop by the Ecolab booth (# 3600) at the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago, May 21-24, 2011.

With sales of \$6 billion and more than 26,000 associates, Ecolab Inc. (NYSE: ECL) is the global leader in cleaning, sanitizing, food safety and infection prevention products and services. Ecolab delivers comprehensive programs and services to foodservice, food and beverage processing, healthcare, and hospitality markets in more than 160 countries. More news and information is available at www.ecolab.com.

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