



Del Monte UK uses D-Count to release fruit juices much faster

Interview with Mr. John Carver,
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Del Monte Europe manufactures fruit preparation and fruit juices.

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Reliable Product Release 7 days earlier!

For which reasons did you decide to introduce a rapid microbiology system in your lab?

With our previous method, we had to wait 8 to 10 days to get our results (incubation of the product for 5 days and then minimum 3 days on Petri dishes). This delay was too long for us; we needed to be able to identify our problems earlier and to reduce our stocks. With the D-count, we can now get the results faster and release and dispatch our finished products faster as well.

Which method did you use before the D-Count and how did you validate it in comparison to your previous method?

We used to work with a growth based method (culture media). As explained earlier, this method was limited by the time to the results, that's why we decided to invest in a rapid microbiology device. However, before investing in this kind of system, we had to ensure that the results we'll get with the D-Count will be at least equivalent to the results we got with our previous method. And in any case, the D-Count had to be validated against our reference method which was the growth based method.

Therefore, we carried out a validation with spiked samples. The products that were to be examined were provided with different spoiling germs and we tested the D-Count in comparison to the Petri dishes. As the results were as good as expected, we decided to use the D-Count method in routine.



Mr. John Carver, QA Manager at Del Monte UK

Do you still apply a classical growth (culture media) method in parallel of the D-Count?

No, we've stopped using any growth based method. However, even if the system performs his own calibration with standard beads, we test some calibrated strains with the D-Count on a regular basis.

How much time do you save with the flow cytometry to get your results?

With the Flow cytometry, we can now save 7 to 9 days to get our results.

Did this method change something in your com-

pany organisation?

Yes, of course. We can now release and dispatch our products faster. We can now provide results when production needs them as well. Consequently, it affects our production planning and stock levels.

Do you think that the advantages of this method affect only the Quality department or does it affect the whole company?

It affects the whole company. Due to the rapid microbiological results we can reduce the quarantine time and the stock levels. In the same time, the microbiological results which can be considered as a sensitive and real-time sensor give information about the whole filling hygiene.