

## Realco extends the expiration date of food products!

*The so-called use-by date (UBD) has far-reaching implications if we consider that, in Europe, some 88 million tons of food end up in the bin each year at a cost of 143 billion euro. From an ethical, environmental and socio-economic point of view this phenomenon is nothing short of alarming because it has a direct impact on producers, processors, distributors, shops and, of course, on consumers.*

*But here's the good news: henceforth it will be possible to extend this UBD by up to 100 %!* *This is the revolutionary finding the Louvain-la-Neuve leader in enzyme-based hygiene solutions has just published at an international level.*

*After 2 years of research, conducted in collaboration with reputable industrialists and financed by the Walloon Region, prestigious partners such as the University of Liège (ULiège) and Genalyse Partner back up these scientific findings.*

**Louvain-la-Neuve, 22 September 2020.** The “*Biofilm Expert*” project analysed the impact of various cleaning protocols, such as regular enzymatic cleaning, on the quality and, thus, the shelf life of food products in the highly sensitive sectors of ready-made meals, community kitchens, cheese production, cutting plants and butcher shops.

*“Our original hypothesis was relatively simple: a facility’s microbiological quality is correlated to the quality of the end product. If production is contaminated with altering bacteria, these bacteria can contaminate the food, causing it to spoil faster”* explains **Laurent Delhalle, Senior Scientist at the Department for Food Science of the University of Liège**. *“So, what do we need to do to reduce the risks of microbiological contamination all along the production chain to a minimum? We compared the results of a cleaning protocol based on traditional chemistry with those of enzymatic treatments at different frequencies.”*

The unique feature of enzyme-based detergents is that they attack biofilms. Biofilms are the natural armour that protects 99 % of bacteria, making them up to 1000 times more resistant to traditional cleaning and disinfection agents and to other external stress factors such as temperature, chemical agents and mechanical force. When these nests of bacteria come into contact with food they proliferate freely and can even become pathogenic. *Listeria, Salmonella, E. coli, etc.*, which are all as serious as they are unpredictable, are only some of the culprits that spring to mind. As enzymes break down the membrane of these biofilms, thorough disinfection is achieved and with a cleaner infrastructure you automatically reduce the risk of food becoming contaminated.

*“Rigorous sampling has allowed us to scientifically prove that the elimination of biofilms on surfaces and the tools used during the production process enhances the quality of food products and extends their shelf life”* specifies **Sébastien Fastrez, R&D Director at Realco**. *“In the concrete case of fresh burgers, where the production chain was regularly and preventively treated with Realco enzymatic solutions, shelf life was extended from 11 to 24 days. “*

The findings of this research project, which has been made possible thanks to funding provided by the DGO6 (the Walloon Research and Technologies Portal) have been published in the Swiss journal “*Frontiers*”, one of the most distinguished scientific journals in the field of microbiology.

*“In the face of many environmental and health challenges, reducing food waste and the pressure on industry is an absolute must” concludes **George Blackman, CEO of Realco.** “By significantly improving the quality, and therefore the shelf life of products in the food processing sector and commercial kitchens, we have managed to prove something that no chemical cleaning solution has been able to do.”*

**About Realco :**

Realco is a Belgian biotech, which pushes back the boundaries of traditional chemistry by developing, manufacturing and distributing enzyme-based hygiene solutions and processes. It has become the world leader in the field of enzymatic hygiene and decontamination, thereby opening the way to solutions that are increasingly effective, economic and ecological. Realco provides innovative solutions both to private individuals and the food industry, as well as collective and commercial catering through its ongoing investments in research and development. With more than 50 employees, the company is constantly increasing its turnover. Realco also has a sales office in the United States (Realzyme) to boost its sales across the Atlantic.

**À propos de Genalyse Partner :**

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