



December 2015

**MAXIMUM RESIDUE LEVELS (MRL) set for  
BENZALKONIUM CHLORIDE (BAC) &  
DIDECYL DIMETHYL AMMONIUM CHLORIDE (DDAC)**

A recent change in the law regarding strict EU limits on pesticide residues in foods has caused great concern in the food industry.

From 12<sup>th</sup> August 2015, the Maximum Residue Levels (MRL) set for Benzalkonium Chloride (BAC) and Didecyl Dimethyl Ammonium Chloride (DDAC), best known examples of a group of chemical compounds known as quaternary ammonium compounds (QACs or QUATs), has been dramatically reduced. The result of this being that the residue transferred to foodstuffs processed on a surface that has been treated with a QAC Sanitiser may still exceed the limit, despite thorough rinsing of the surface with potable water.

QACs are used in a wide range of bactericidal cleaners and disinfectants, especially products used for sanitising surfaces in food and healthcare establishments. Such products have been shown to be effective against a broad spectrum of bacteria, and, recent studies have shown, that their use in food process and catering hygiene does not present a risk to human health.

We have carried out various test procedures in the laboratory and, herewith, guidelines on how QAC residue in foods may be reduced to a level below MRL when using Est-eem or EC4 Sanitiser:

- When preparing a solution from a concentrate formulation, ensure the product is diluted correctly. Alternatively use Esteem RTU (ready to use).
- Apply the solution to the surface using a disposable cloth or trigger spray.
- Leave for 30 seconds to ensure full bactericidal effect.
- Wipe the surface dry with a disposable cloth or paper towel.
- Rinse with potable water.
- Wipe dry with a disposable cloth or paper towel.

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