

EU *Listeria monocytogenes* Legislation Update

A significant step toward a stronger food safety culture

From **1 July 2026**, **EU Regulation 2024/2895** is introducing a new microbiological standard for *Listeria monocytogenes* which will impact food manufacturers across a broad range of ready-to-eat (RTE) foods. The aim of this amendment to Regulation (EC) 2073/2005 is in reinforcing consumer protection across the EU by reducing outbreaks of listeriosis which threaten consumer health, food quality, brand reputation and profitability. This update reinforces shared responsibility across the supply chain to further enhance the essential requirement of a preventive, science-driven food safety culture.

What You Need to Know About the Changes

Listeria is an ever-present threat to safe production. Ensuring complete absence of *Listeria monocytogenes* throughout the entire shelf-life of your Products supporting growth are typically those where pH and water activity allow *Listeria monocytogenes* to multiply. Even with the highest hygiene standards contamination can still occur.

The new legislation is an acknowledgement of including temperature control deviations and post-process handling variability. The changes require that RTE foods that support the growth of *Listeria monocytogenes* must either:

- **Demonstrate absence (not detected in 25 g) where required, or provide scientific evidence that levels will not exceed 100 cfu/g throughout shelf-life, or,**
- **Provide validated scientific evidence which shows that *Listeria monocytogenes* will not exceed 100 cfu/g at any point during shelf-life.**

Which Products Are Affected?

Any products that incorporate handling steps or are exposed after processing have a post-lethality contamination / recontamination risk. These include **cold smoked fish, soft cheeses, cooked sliced meats, salads, sandwiches and pâté, in addition to bakery products made with fresh cream**. If your product supports *Listeria* growth and has any environmental exposure prior to packaging, the new standards apply.



What Will You Need To Do?

To ensure compliance you will need to determine shelf-life using scientific, evidence-based methods including challenge testing and /or predictive microbiology modeling, conduct regular validation and verification of your control measures, update HACCP plans to reflect new risk assessments, and ensure your staff are trained in the revised requirements and methodologies. This will be supported by control authorities who will be expected to strengthen oversight by verifying the robustness of validation studies, challenge non-compliance, and increase cold-chain surveillance

Strengthening environmental monitoring (e.g. zoning and routine *Listeria* spp. verification) will be critical.

How Can Diversey Support Your Compliance?

We work alongside your internal teams to build practical, data-driven solutions that strengthen both food safety performance and optimize operational control. Our technical specialists can help you adapt your food safety programs to meet the new regulatory expectations through:

- **Hygiene optimisation and corrective action planning.** We can help ensure a thorough understanding of this foodborne threat, with essential insights on preventative actions that help minimize contamination risk.
- **Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) updates, risk assessments, and process validation.** We deliver strict food safety programs, including HACCP, helping you identify and mitigate potential food safety hazards in your production process.
- **Tailored training for technical, production, and QA teams.** A well-trained workforce that recognise key hygiene issues is crucial to avoid cross-contamination. Diversey's Hygiene Academy E-learning platform delivers our acknowledged expertise in easily accessible and convenient training modules.
- Balancing compliance risk with total cost of hygiene programmes. A end to end approach considering labour, downtime, waste, and utilities.

Further Resources and Expertise

Listeria Risks: Our **Listeria Control Guide** ensures a thorough understanding of this foodborne threat.



Prevention and Control: In our **Webinar**, Diversey's Processed Food sector specialists share insights on preventing and controlling *Listeria* and other foodborne bacteria.



Protect Your Brand: Check out the full range of hygiene and food safety courses from our **Hygiene Academy**.

