

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Irradiated Colilert/Colisure Products**

*Beginning the week of March 19, 2007, all IDEXX Colilert<sup>®</sup> and Colisure<sup>®</sup> products for the detection of total coliforms/E. coli will be irradiated.*

**Q. What products are affected?**

A. This change will affect Colilert, Colilert-18 and Colisure (Colilert/Colisure) products.

**Q. Why will the Colilert/Colisure products be irradiated?**

A. We are now offering low-level gamma-irradiated Colilert/Colisure products to improve quality and eliminate possible contamination from coliform bacteria. IDEXX has extensively validated the use of low-level gamma-irradiation as the pasteurization technology for these products. IDEXX has demonstrated that this treatment effectively inactivates at least 3-6 log<sub>10</sub> cell numbers of spiked total coliforms/E. coli without affecting the performance of the product.

**Q. Will there be any difference in the performance of these irradiated products?**

A. No. There is no difference between irradiated and non-irradiated Colilert/Colisure products concerning both microbiological performance and shelf life. However, you may notice some differences in the packaging and powder, such as a slight smell and/or color change.

**Q. Will the new irradiated products smell differently than the non-irradiated product?**

A. You may notice a slightly different odor as a result of irradiation. Although this is a slight change from the odor of non-irradiated Colilert/Colisure, IDEXX testing shows that this does not affect the performance of the product.

**Q. Why does the Colilert/Colisure snap pack look different?**

A. The irradiated plastic snap pack is a light gold color and will look slightly different than packaging that is not irradiated. The low level irradiation that Colilert/Colisure is exposed to changes the color of the plastic snap pack. Irradiation affects package color only and has not demonstrated any change in package integrity.

**Q. Why is the powder color of irradiated Colilert/Colisure different?**

A. You may notice that irradiated Colilert has a slightly darker color as a result of irradiation. Although this color is a slight change from non-irradiated Colilert, IDEXX testing shows that this does not affect the performance of the product.

**Q. Will this affect shelf life or storage conditions?**

A. No. Shelf life and storage conditions will not change. IDEXX has been validating the irradiated Colilert products for more than one year, and there is no need to change shelf life or storage claims.

**Q. Will I need a new comparator for interpreting test results?**

A. No.

**Q. Is this going to affect the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved status of these products?**

A. No. The EPA has been informed of this change, and because this does not reflect a change in product formulation, *Colilert, Colilert-18 and Colisure will continue to be sold as EPA-approved products.*

**Q. Are there any health or safety issues associated with gamma irradiation?**

A. The process of gamma irradiation leaves no residual radioactivity after the process is complete. The safe use of gamma irradiation has been documented and used in many applications, including the food industry and the medical device industry since the 1950s.