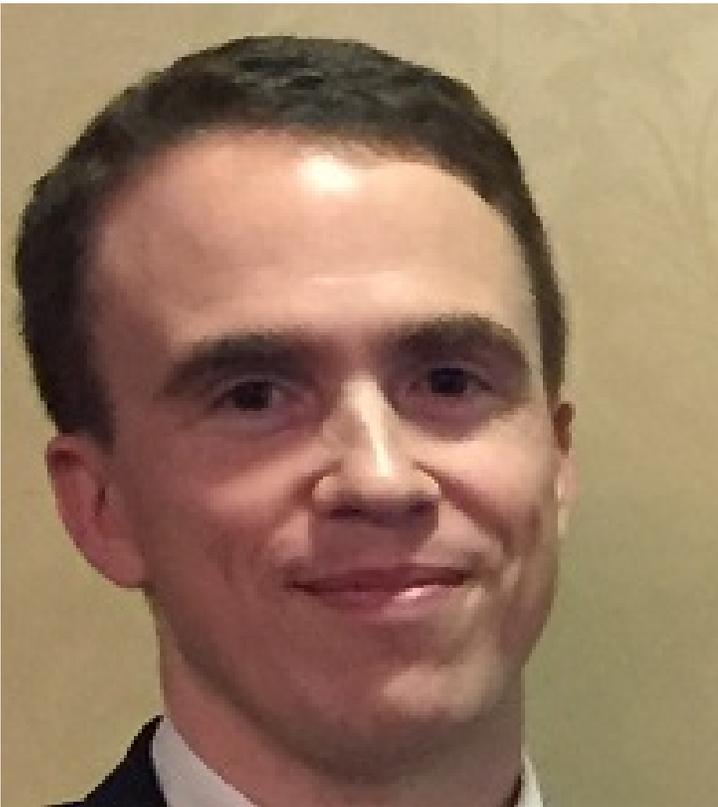


Food industry is still adjusting to new regulations

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Mérieux NutriSciences is dedicated to protecting consumers' health throughout the world, by delivering a wide range of testing and consulting services to the food and nutrition, agrochemicals, pharma and cosmetics industries.



Today Mérieux NutriSciences has a global presence in 21 countries with over 100 laboratories throughout North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia-Pacific. Its employee strength is over 6500. The company has achieved an annual revenue of over \$500 million. Recently it has acquired Bangalore Testing Laboratories, reinforcing its footprint in India. It has started its operation in 2009 through a joint venture with MicroChem Silliker; followed in 2015 by a full acquisition.

Renaud JONQUIERES, Senior VP MEA-ASPAC, Mérieux NutriSciences, who was in Bangalore recently, spoke to NuFFooDS Spectrum about the current status of food safety in Asia and growth opportunities for the company in the region.

What is the current status of food safety and quality sector in Asia?

Too many food scandals in the recent years and months increased customer awareness on food safety. From China to India and going through South East Asia, families read every day on social media and in the news about food poisoning, food adulteration and food fraud. This overall increased awareness of the public and puts pressure on governments which are

taking more and more actions to control the entire food chain. From agriculture to food transformation and retailing, the expectations for food quality become stricter and stricter.

In which industry segments do you see the growth for your company in the coming years?

Asian middle class moves away from rural areas and work to busy cities. At the same time people consume more and more prepared food and tend to spend less time cooking. Taking into account the increased awareness mentioned earlier together with the higher consumption of transformed food, I believe that overall industries of prepared food will grow fast and will have massive needs to guarantee their product quality. Also the increase in daily calories consumed and the trend toward protein richer intake in Asia will certainly see a focus on animal base productions such as; seafood, dairy, poultry and meat principally. Those products have generally short shelf lives and are complex by nature thus requiring a specific attention to guarantee their safety.

What are the challenges before the industry in the region?

Food industry is still adjusting to new regulations. Moving away from a culture of compliance to a culture of risk management and food safety will be the biggest challenge to overcome. Most of the large companies exporting understand that they need to be ahead of the curve and use Quality Management system to predict and avoid crisis. This type of attitude should definitely be encouraged more by regulators so that smaller companies take this direction as well.

How do you see the growth for the company in the region and in which countries do you see more growth?

Asia being the most populated part of the world and having one of the fastest economic developments I can only see a bright future for food safety in this region. Everybody needs to eat and more people will pay attention to make sure they eat safe and healthy food. Mérieux NutriSciences continues to invest strongly in Asia and as an example just reinforced its position in India with the opening of a third laboratory in Bangalore this month.