



Newsletter

Spring 1996



Directors Virginia Lucey and Mairi Munro discuss the development of E & O's IT strategy

Firstly, I would like to thank all of our customers for renewing their standing orders for this new financial year and welcome the numerous new customers to E & O.

This last twelve months has passed like a FLASH! New

products, better systems, more staff and, in my case, no holidays! With regard to the farm, it was a record-breaking summer - drought followed by a lush autumn, then tundra to bring in the New Year! Never mind, spring has sprung and as far as our animals are concerned, they are fit and well and looking forward to

returning to summer pasture.

Successful Exhibiting

Since our Autumn newsletter, the E & O team has increased and achieved many goals. The Birmingham Exhibition, back in November, was very successful in launching our new prepared media range. I hope everyone who managed to visit our stand enjoyed their wee dram! A huge range of samples were sent out as a result of positive enquiries and subsequently, these have been turned into new standing orders.

Costs of Quality

Every year, both you as customers and we as suppliers are expected to reduce costs and increase quality. We have to work together to achieve

this. Yes, we can always reduce overheads, but something has to suffer. I am not prepared to compromise quality or starve my animals, but I feel very strongly that there are areas where we could reduce costs. Over the next six months my sales force will be discussing several ideas with each and every customer.

Continuous Improvement

Further investment in buildings, equipment, systems and people are all ongoing. New products are being developed and above all, we are committed to constantly providing excellent customer service. Pride is our motto, customers are our future and never forget, we really do care!

Virginia Lucey

New Product Lines

Quality: E & O take quality much further than a paper work system. Sourcing of fresh raw materials is of paramount importance. To complement our standard range of prepared media we are now offering:

Egg Yolk Emulsion

Fresh eggs sourced from a neighbouring farm guarantee, not only that the eggs are as fresh as possible, but that they are completely antibiotic free. They are aseptically separated and dispensed in a variety of volumes to suit specific requirements. Egg yolk emulsion can be supplied with potassium tellurite suitable for the addition to Baird-Parker media.

Cooked Meat Medium

Fresh chopped ox-hearts remain popular as the basis of cooked meat media. Our ox-hearts are locally sourced and the fat is removed before double mincing. The meat is then processed into the final product giving a broth which is clear and fat free. A wide range of broths are used to overlay the media in various volumes, again demonstrating our ability to suit specific customer requirements.



Reta Black Packing Bottled Media

Salt Broths

A full range of Salt Broths manufactured to customers' specification is available for Streptococcal isolation and MRSA screening. Whether you require a 6.5%, 7%, 10% or any other concentration in a bijou or universal, we will be happy to supply.

QC Crisis Hits E & O

Investors in People

We at E & O Laboratories have successfully manufactured culture media to customers' recipes for some time. No-one, therefore, envisaged the trouble that could be caused by a seemingly simple request.

A customer requested a large volume of Chicken Soup Broth following the method of Atlas 1993 (1). The method is reproduced here in full:

Chicken Soup Broth

Composition per 5L:

Chicken	2.5kg
Peppercorns	6
Cloves	3
Bay Leaf	2
Celery, stalks including leaves	2
Onion, large	1
Carrot	1
Dill, fresh	1/4 cup
NaCl	0.1g

Preparation of Medium: Add a nice, whole chicken to a large pot. Add enough tap water to cover the chicken by about 1 in. Stud the whole, peeled onion with the three cloves. Add the onion and remaining ingredients to the pot. Rapidly heat and bring to boiling. Lower heat to a simmer and cook for 1 to 1.5 hr. Remove the chicken and vegetables from the broth. Remove skin and bones from the chicken. Cut up the meat into 1 inch pieces. Return the meat to the broth. If desired, slice the carrot and celery and return them to the broth.

Use: **For the growth and nutrition of microbiologists**

The ingredients were sourced and the production staff duly prepared the medium, finally dispensing it in 500 ml amounts. Samples were taken during the dispensing process and were sent to the Quality Control Laboratory.

Within the hour, the QC staff called to say the batch had failed. The appearance was all wrong; some ingredients had gone soft and mushy. "Most likely," they said "it's been overheated. Best make a new batch." Very helpfully, they arranged to dispose of the failed product.

The second batch was again carefully prepared, samples taken as before and again sent to QC.

Disaster. It's failed again. This time, the "NaCl concentration is too low. Send the whole batch to us for quarantine." It was heartening to see everyone working as a team, the QC staff kindly dealing with the C.O.S.H.H. compliance, allowing the production staff to have a third attempt. This time we thought we'd cracked it. But once again a failure, this time after 48 hours.

The samples were arriving at QC after being allowed to cool and this temperature drop was playing havoc with their tests. Could we possibly send the samples in a vacuum flask?

As Production Manager, I have to say I'm stumped.

We are having another go and if you have any suggestions, please let me know.

In the meantime, I must investigate a report of quarantined Chicken Soup Broth appearing in the QC freezer. Now that I think of it, the QC staff rarely buy anything for lunch.....

Alan Dickie

References

- (1) Atlas, R. *Handbook of Microbiological Media* pp 215, 1993
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As E & O Laboratories continue to grow and develop, the Company remains wholly committed to the Investors in People ideals. Consolidation of existing skills and knowledge through Continual Personal Development Plans, as well as further training wherever appropriate, results in a dedicated and highly motivated workforce.

Congratulations to....

Alan Dickie, Production Manager, was elected as a Member of the Institute of Biology in March 1996. The designation of Chartered Biologist is renowned for demonstrating professional competence combined with a high level of biological accomplishment.

Michael Smyth and **Debbie Shaw**, Animal Technicians, have successfully completed the Accredited Training for Personnel under the Animals (Scientific Procedure) Act 1986, from the Institute of Biology.

New Appointments

London Based Sales Manager Richard Seuke



Richard Seuke was appointed as Sales Manager back in January. He joins the management team to develop sales and to promote E & O both here in the UK and also throughout Europe. Having a good understanding and historical background in the microbiology customer base, his priority over the past three months has been to both visit and care for the English customers. Located close to Heathrow Airport, with a fully equipped office, Richard is ideally placed to expand the customer base in the south as well as in Europe. He can be contacted on Tel/Fax: 01932 761544, Mobile: 0836 597428.

Harry Habbet was appointed farm manager in November. He joins the management team to take control of the agricultural enterprise. With expanding blood sales both in the UK and abroad, the donor herds are constantly expanding. Harry has worked with a wide range of animals throughout his thirty years as a stockman. With extensive knowledge of grassland management and previous expertise with Home Office legislation, he has taken full responsibility for the quality of the essential raw blood products.

IT Investment

The AS400 is IBM's flagship quality system, offering a truly integrated real-time computer environment.

Rapid batch traceability, flexible sales order processing, accurate invoicing, and now batch numbers printed on all delivery notes all form part of E & O's custom-designed software, allowing the Company to provide customer service second to none. Combining this

with stringent production controls, streamlining stock levels to the Just-In-Time philosophy, and improved productivity, allows E & O to compete effectively and efficiently in the marketplace.

Over the next six months, Mairi Munro, Finance and I.T. Director, will be developing the system further to open new doors and ensure the smooth running as both the product range and our customer base grows.

E & O's Expansion Plans

Due to increased sales this Spring, E & O has taken the decision to bring three phase power to the facility. Until now, the operation has been run utilising an independent generator, but due to increased sales, a mains supply is now essential, keeping the existing generator as a backup. A full new plant room has been planned and drawn, with capacity to fit another twenty seven cubic foot autoclave and boiler for the production of steam. This expansion will be completed by the end of May, allowing export customers to have tighter deadlines on large orders and to allow the production team more space to work.

Further investment has been made with regard to equipment, both in bottled media and with the poured plates. A specially designed fan-assisted oven has been commissioned to inspissate all TB media. This will dramatically reduce batch variability and improve quality, as large volumes are manufactured in a multitude of different bottle sizes. Pourer-stackers, preparators, pumps, the list goes on and on! If you would like to know more about the production facility and its procedures, please contact Alan Dickie on 01324 840404.

Poured Plates

E & O Laboratories produce an extensive range of poured plates for both the clinical and pharmaceutical markets.

Dehydrated culture media and other ingredients are sourced according to customer specification and the finished product is manufactured to the BS EN ISO9002 standard. Each batch is quality controlled using NCTC strains of micro-organisms and after passing a bacterial and fungal screen at various incubation temperatures, the batches are then released to stock.

Full certification for individual batches can be issued on request.

Nan Morrow operating the PourerStacker



Farm News

During the winter months, the donor horses are split into two herds and housed in large purpose built yards with an ad-lib feeding system. The yards are specially designed to allow the horses to wander freely outside in good weather, whilst having adequate space to feed and rest inside when weather conditions are severe.

Most of the donor animals are retired riding horses, not due to age, but because they are unfit to perform due to some

form of unsoundness. This may be a leg injury or back trouble or even a barren brood mare. After the full quarantine procedures have been passed, the new animal enters the main blood herd. It is at this point that we assess the animal's character. Horses are very similar to humans with regard to social behaviour. Some horses fit in with the group immediately, while some find a devoted friend and cannot be parted, some are loners and others are real bullies! It is

essential that there is a calm atmosphere and all the animals can feed, water and rest without stress. A combination of good stockmanship and carefully designed buildings affords the horses five star accommodation.

Sheep are quite different and very social animals compared with horses. They do not bear grudges and prefer to live and eat all together. Having said this, they do suffer from stress especially when they are treated for the normal

routine veterinary health care practices, such as dipping, feet trimming, shearing and even worming. The mortality rate in sheep is much higher than any other common farm animal. The donor flock is only housed for three months of the year and enjoy free grazing for the remainder.

All the donor animals are looking forward to this coming summer, let's hope it is lush, and they all enjoy those lazy days ahead!

Exhibition News

WAM 96

E & O Laboratories will be attending the Birthday Symposium marking twenty years of Wessex Applied Microbiologist, at the Novotel in Southampton during 19 - 21 April.

Sales Manager, Richard Seuke, and Customer Services Co-ordinator, Roseanne Ballingall, will be representing the Company, and look forward to meeting existing and new customers from London and the

south of England.

E & O's successful range of custom made bottled media will be on show, along with pre poured plates and various animal bloods. This will be E & O's second major exhibition in the South within the past nine months, reinforcing their position within the market as a customer driven organisation providing quality products at competitive prices.

E & O Stand No. 21.

Microbe 96

E & O Laboratories will be attending Microbe again this year which is being held at the University of Sheffield between 5 - 8 September.

As a result of contacts made at the last show held in 1993, E & O were able to substantially

increase sales throughout the United Kingdom.

For further information regarding Microbe 96, please contact Alan Pease at Kings Mill Hospital on 01623 22515 Extn. 3631.

Export Update

E & O's European market share continues to increase following expansion into Belgium, Holland and Scandinavia. Significant sales are also being achieved in the Republic of Ireland with further success in the Middle East and African markets, not only with animal blood, but also with bottled media.

ADLAB

E & O Laboratories will be attending Adlab in Dublin between 1 - 2 May.

As the Company continues to expand and develop its European markets, their attendance at Adlab reinforces their commitment and continuing support for overseas agents.

Information Technology Update

E-Mail addresses as follows:

Customer Service	-	ROSEANNE@HARRIS.ALMAC.CO.UK
Sales	-	RICHARD.SEUKE@HARRIS.ALMAC.CO.UK
Technical Enquiries	-	ALAN.DICKIE@HARRIS.ALMAC.CO.UK
Finance and IT Enquiries	-	MAIRI.MUNRO@HARRIS.ALMAC.CO.UK
The Last Resort	-	VIRGINIA.LUCEY@HARRIS.ALMAC.CO.UK

Alternatively, contact E & O at the address below.

E & O Laboratories Limited
Burnhouse, Bonnybridge, Scotland, FK4 2HH. Tel: 01324 840404 Fax: 01324 841314