

Dioxin in your egg? There's an app for that

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Eggs are examined at a laboratory of the Office for Chemical and Veterinary Investigation in Muenster, western Germany. As Germany grapples with a food scandal that has forced thousands of farms to halt sales, one technology firm has come up with an enterprising way to pick out the bad eggs at the supermarket by scanning the barcodes with a smartphone.

As Germany grapples with a food scandal that has forced thousands of farms to halt sales, one technology firm has come up with an enterprising way to pick out the bad eggs at the supermarket.

The company, Barcoo, sells software to scan barcodes with smartphones, for example to compare prices of similar products, and has moved quickly to offer its customers the ability to test eggs for potential contamination.

"You type in the unique number that is found on each egg and then you get an answer whether there is [dioxin](#) inside or not," Martin Scherer, the

firm's business development manager, told AFP.

Authorities have published a list of serial numbers of products from suspect farms and also numbers from facilities known to be safe, Scherer explained. "So we have a positive list and a negative list."

The software also informs [consumers](#) whether the egg they are considering is organic, in which case dioxin is not a risk.

Scanning the barcode on a box of eggs does not work because a box can contain eggs from different sources, he said.

According to a survey of around 500 people in Sunday's Bild am Sonntag, one in five Germany are steering clear of eggs in the wake of the crisis that has shaken public faith in [food safety](#).

More than 100,000 [eggs](#) have been destroyed.

And Scherer said that people appeared to be seizing the opportunity to download the free dioxin-checking application.

"Our usage is four to five times higher than normal," he said.

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