

New app to improve food allergy testing

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Professor Clare Mills

Scientists from The University of Manchester have teamed up with global food-safety diagnostic company Romer Labs UK Ltd to create a new tool which will help improve the lives of people suffering with food allergies.

The new Apple iOS7 App allows manufacturers to improve the checks for allergens on food being produced in factories.

The app developed by Romer Labs UK Ltd was part of a project focused on analysis of allergens with Micromass UK, LGC and The University of Manchester.

Professor Clare Mills, leading allergy expert at The University of

Manchester, said: "Monitoring cleaning to remove allergen residues on shared processing equipment is an important part of effective allergen management during food manufacture.

"This practice helps support risk-based approaches to minimise the use of precautionary "may contain" labels on manufactured foods.

"Lateral-flow tests – which are intended to detect the presence of allergens - are often used for checking cleaning of equipment but reading the test result is subjective and can depend on the person reading the measurement.

"Having an app like this makes reading the test result easier and more consistent between users. Such innovation can help support the drive to improve allergen management processes required to reduce the use of "may contain" statements."

Known as the AgraApp, the new tool enables food manufacturers to analyse and document food allergen results obtained with AgraStrip® Brazil Nut, Almond, Cashew, Hazelnut, Macadamia Nut, Peanut, Pistachio and Walnut using a lateral flow test.

The procedure is simple: with the smartphone, the user is taking a picture of the test strip result region and AgraApp is matching the colour of the test line to a given colour palette in the [app](#), allowing the output of a semi-quantitative result. The picture together with the result will be stored on the smartphone and can be forwarded by mail to the computer instantly. Detailed test kit instructions, frequently asked questions, a stop watch, re-order forms as well as technical support information make the AgraApp a suitable tool. AgraApp is free of charge and can be downloaded easily in the Apple App Store.

Romer Labs has the largest allergen product portfolio currently available

on the market and offers tailored one-stop solutions for all diagnostic needs and outstanding support for customers on an international level. It has laboratories in Austria, United Kingdom and United States, Romer Labs is also offering analytical services for a wide range of allergens.

Provided by University of Manchester

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