

INTERVIEW: DAVID PYMER

Medical Device Sterilization

Mr. Pymer is general manager of Harwell Dosimeters, Ltd. in the U.K. He was interviewed by 21st Century correspondent Ilko Dimov.

Question: What is the advantage of irradiation for the sterilization of medical or other forms of equipment?

Pymer: Medical device sterilized by irradiation tends to be done because it can be done at the end use, so its a final, terminal sterilization system. The good thing about it is that it can be manufactured and sealed and then packed into its shipping quantities, and then irradiated. So the radiation passes through the material and keeps it intact and sterile within its material. So as long as the barrier—the seal—is maintained, the irradiation pass-

es through the boxing and packaging, and does what it needs to do in sterilizing the product.

Question: Right now, you have a huge debate in Europe. Germany is moving away from nuclear, and Italy, had a referendum a few days ago against nuclear energy. What do you think about this? Is this fear justified?

Pymer: ... The issue with nuclear, is the by-product, the fuel, the waste. Can that be managed? I've heard a keynote speaker today who says "yes it can." It should be managed, and they should build fast neutron reactors that will help, and actually remove the waste that's currently in the world, and generate electricity. So that's a wonderful thing to hear to-



Harwell Dosimeters, Ltd.

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day, but will the world say "yes, that's what we want to do," or will they just forget about it and bury it under the ground?

... [I]f they can use it to provide more electricity, that would make perfect sense...

INTERVIEW DR. JU-WOON LEE

Educate the Consumer!

Ju-Woon Lee is general manager of the Advanced Radiation Technology Institute at the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute. His presentation at the conference was on irradiating Korean seaweed soup for meals in space. He was interviewed by Ilko Dimov.

21st Century: What is your message for the North American consumer about radiation technologies?

Lee: The German [anti-nuclear] strategy is a pity. But another chance is coming to change the acceptance of the consumers. I think that education and communication are very important things, rather than technology.

Radiation technology is well documented and well

launched. But the important thing is the choice of the market, and a lot of the market is consumers.



Irradiation allows tropical fruits to be picked ripe before being irradiation processed for export. The consumer benefits by having a tastier product.

21st Century: In developing sector countries, what is required for food irradiation, and how is it beneficial for consumers?

Lee: I think the adoption of this technology is dependent on the situation of each country. The technology is used for both food safety and food security, which are both very important for the progress of the human being.

This technology is very useful to manage and maintain food preservation, and hygiene quality, and also developing other needs of industries.

But scientists in the industry have to think about how to introduce this technology, how to educate and communicate this technology with consumers.

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