# Monitoring the cold chain – the big risk today is at store level

The cold chain tends to be properly remote monitored at large farms, food processor plants and in the DC's.

That's because they hold a lot of stock and the financial managers there know just how big the loss can be if they don't detect and act on refrigeration failures early.

As the amount of stock held in any one facility or truck goes down along the cold chain, the use of remote monitoring declines as the stock held diminishes.

It's at store level that the use of remote monitoring hits rock bottom. While there is relatively less volume and value to loose at the store end of the cold chain, the risk in terms of food safety and loss of reputation to the retail brand grows.

Franchise holders may have clauses in their supply agreements with their franchisees that pass the risks of product loss from cold room and cabinet breakdowns and any loss arising out subsequent food poisoning to the store owner. However the risk to the retail brand above the store entrance's reputation cannot be avoided.

In the past, newspapers seldom carried news of isolated food poisoning incidents occurring in a single store. Social media has just changed that. Today, the chances of reputation damage are now far higher. As are the chances that the consequences are far more serious.

Like superbugs in hospitals, pathogens, in general, have become much more resistant to germicides and fungicides. What might have resulted in a mild tummy disorder 20 to 30 years ago could now result in death or permanent damage.

The risks have also increased on the legal front. Prior to the Consumer Protection Act, a complainant had to prove negligence.

Now, in the absence of data to the contrary, such as a log of cabinet temperatures, you're deemed to be guilty.

Another reason why store's are at greater risk from food poisoning incidents, is the rise of contingency law practices who'll take on food poisoning cases from the public at no fee. They know that most retailers are insured and see opportunities for big settlements.

## Big risks for retailers

**In the cold chain**

- leaving cold chain goods on the receiving floor
- Cold stores not on temperature
- Cabinets not on temperature

**Food Prep**

- Product kept too long at the wrong temperature

> "If you can eat a pie out of the pie warmer without burning your mouth it is not safe."

The pathogen load increases sharply above 8 deg C. If product was frozen and started thawing and you refreeze it, the pathogen load is just suspended – it does not go away.

If a cold room goes down and you cannot move stock or get it up and running in time to save it, you have to do a full scale de-contamination which costs time and money.

In short, the risks of poisoning ones customers and being successfully prosecuted for it are considerably higher today than in the past. There is a lot more that has to be done today to prevent food contamination.

Firstly, for all parties in the cold chain, it is important to look on it as a continuum as opposed to a series of islands. What happens upstream in the cold chain will be compounded by what happens downstream

Second, knowledge is dangerous. For example if you monitor temperatures of your cold rooms and cabinets and do nothing about a failure promptly, it can come back to bite you in a court of law. One has to act.

Most times when we cook food above certain temperatures for a certain length of time we will kill the pathogens. Be aware, most bacteria can live at 120 deg C. Ground beef at 71 deg C, Chicken at 74 deg C and Salmonella dies at 80 deg C when cooked for 10 minutes.

One of the first things one should do is to put in a system of online temperature loggers into one's cold rooms and cabinets that'll send you messages to your phone and to other responsible persons that a unit has gone down. This will give you more time to respond and safely save stock and remove the danger of allowing the food you sell to be contaminated. SR



# Bale recyclables with the new Bramidan B4 baler

Akura Engineering has replaced their Bramidan B3 baler with the new B4 model.

This easy-to-fit small footprint baler is now easier, faster and quieter to use than its predecessor and it is even safer. All it requires is a space of 975mm wide X 715mm deep and 1 985mm high and a 10 Amp 230 Volt electric socket.

With a 4-ton press force, deep stroke and efficient retainers, it achieves a high compaction ratio for the optimum reduction of storage space. All steps of the operation are simple and safe and the very low noise improves the work environment. Also, reducing empty boxes reduces pilferage. A full light indicator flashes when a bale is ready and prevents overloading. The compacted bale is ejected with a safe and automatic two handed operation.

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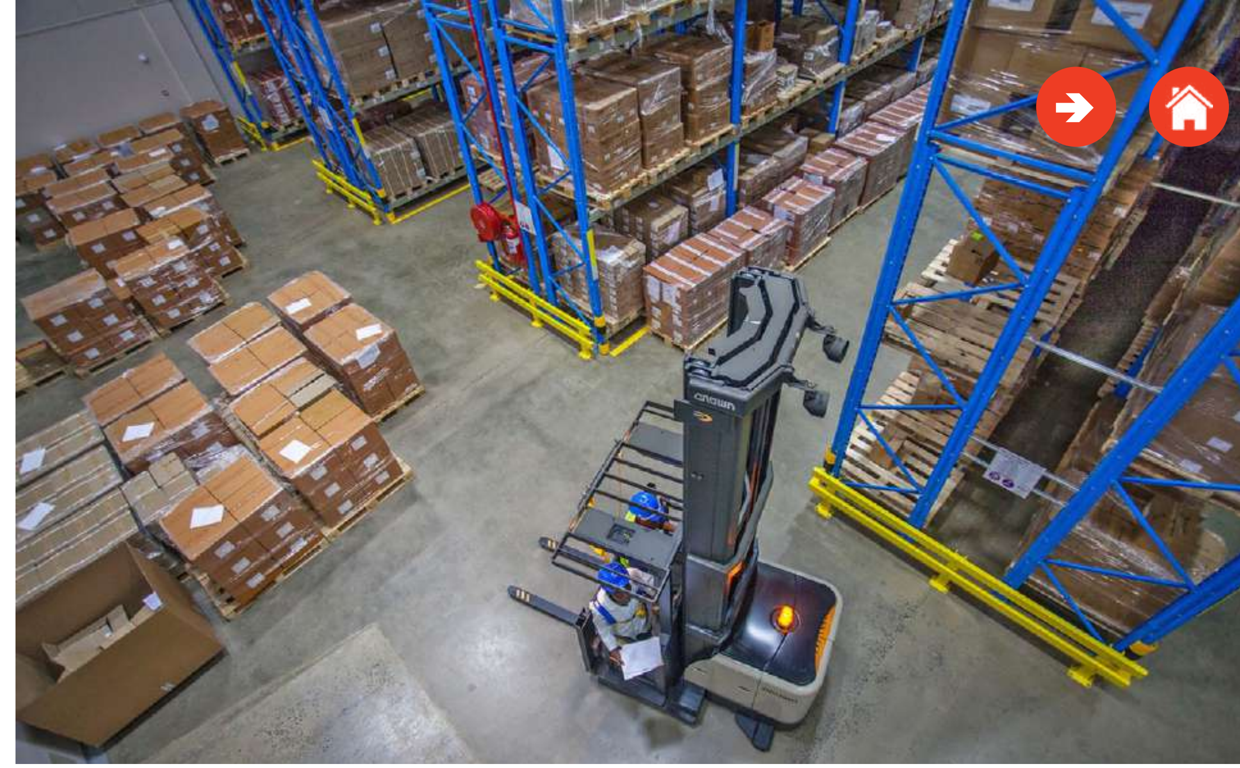

# Imperial Logistics offers new bonded storage solution in Kenya

**Imperial Logistics has acquired International Healthcare Distributors in Kenya and thereby gained access to bond licences for the bonded storage of pharmaceuticals, chemical products and electronics. This extension of the JSE-listed supply chain and logistics leader's route-to-market capabilities in East Africa will speed up the delivery of medicines to patients and reduce multinational clients' duties and tariffs, says Imperial Logistics' African Regions CEO, Johan Truter.**

"These bond licences allow us to create a distribution hub in Kenya for products destined for Uganda, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Rwanda and beyond, with fewer links in the supply chain. Multinationals will be able to export products into the east and central African markets through Kenya more efficiently, with less risk, less complexity and at a lower total landed cost. Optimal stock levels and less stock outs will also be enabled," he expands.

The bond licences, issued by the Kenya Regulatory Authorities, enable Imperial Logistics to offer bonded warehousing for 1 200 pallet spaces of ambient pharmaceutical products as well as 84 pallet spaces of cold chain pharmaceuticals. On the electronics side, Imperial Logistics can offer 450 pallet spaces of bonded storage, while 650 pallet spaces of bonded warehousing for chemical products will be available in an independent facility, Truter reveals.

Truter outlines the function and benefits of bonded storage: "Also known as a customs and excise warehouse, this facility enables companies to import and store products from a different country of origin without declaring or clearing them through customs if these products are later to be exported to another destination.

"The products will be stored in a state-of-the-art, good manufacturing practice and good distribution practice compliant warehouse in Nairobi, Kenya. The clearing, freight-forwarding, warehousing and distribution is managed using world-class systems that provide visibility of our clients' products throughout the process. These systems include SAP Enterprise Resource Planning and SAP Extended Warehouse Management, as well as the Soloplan transportation management system."

Truter notes that Kenya, with its central location and developed infrastructure, is the ideal gateway to many countries on the continent. "The largest port in East Africa, Mombasa, is strategically located and provides a direct link to approximately 80 ports worldwide and a railway line to Uganda and Tanzania. High levies, delays and other logistics challenges have, however, resulted in multinationals placing their distribution hubs in Dubai, Europe, or South Africa, with limited focus on Kenya."

He says that this new offering is in line with Imperial Logistics' strategy to customise and expand its route-to-market capabilities to meet clients' specific needs and give them a competitive edge. Truter concludes...

**"This in turn drives real economic growth and quality of life through the efficient and cost-effective movement of goods. This is exactly what our new Kenya bond store offering will achieve."**

Imperial™ logistics

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