

Kraft opens analysis lab

A new analysis lab for stringent in-house testing of products was recently opened at the Kraft Foods South Africa chocolate factory in Port Elizabeth. The R4.6 million investment will enable accurate and sensitive analyses of products in line, with stringent microbiological testing requirements set by the global snacking company, now Mondelez International.



Jean Spence, Mondelez Executive Vice President for Research, Development and Quality, formally opens the new microbiology laboratory.

Mondelez executive VP for research, development and quality, Jean Spence, said the investment reflects the company's commitment to food safety and quality. At the facility's opening, she emphasised that ensuring food safety through science-based research was paramount in the making of the company's products.

"We are affiliated with a number of global institutes and organisations that promote a multi-sectoral and collaborative approach towards the exchange of knowledge and expertise to address key issues in food safety, food defence and nutrition."

Spence added that the trust and confidence of consumers is built on the promise of safety and quality and that the company had put in place strong food safety and quality systems for ingredients and products.

"Making delicious food that is safe to eat is paramount to our success. It is the core of our heritage and part of our culture she stressed.

Michelle Pickering, director quality, research and development for Middle East and Africa at Kraft Foods SA, said the lab was the biggest in the region and was designed by a cross-functional team to allow for increased sampling and testing capacity. It also brought with it the need for more lab technicians.

"The layout, newly-introduced equipment and increase in staffing resources, will enable the team to perform modern, accurate and sensitive analyses," said Pickering.

Because testing can now be done in-house and not via Kraft-approved external laboratories, other advantages are cost-savings and improved analysis turnaround time. The latter, in turn, means speedier stock release and distribution to the customer.