

E8 : SHELF LIFE POLICY

We no longer apply use by dates to all products. After discussions with the major laboratory accreditation bodies it is clear that they are of a similar mind-set to us here at Microspec and agree that much of the wastage in the industry, particularly plastic consumable items is unnecessary.

Our policy on shelf life is therefore as follows :

If there is a legislative requirement for a product to have a shelf life then we will make suitable assessments and apply a useful shelf life to the product. Similarly if it's clear that over time a product will lose some functionality or effectiveness a shelf life will be applied. Where the product is an inert plastic product however for example inoculation products such as loops and spreaders or bags such as autoclave bags a shelf life will not be applied. If the product is supplied sterile then it is safe to assume that the product will remain sterile until opened.

The feedback we have received from industry regulators is that the above policy is sensible and that in any case laboratories have a duty to quality control consumable items before use and should not simply rely on quality control performed by manufacturers or shelf lives applied.

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