Charles River Announces Endosafe® Cartridge Recycling Program, Strengthening Sustainability Commitment

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A solution for laboratories seeking to reduce single-use plastic waste

WILMINGTON, Mass.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jun. 16, 2025-- Charles River Laboratories International, Inc. (NYSE: CRL) today announced a recycling program, developed in partnership with international recycling leader TerraCycle®, to give new life to single-use plastic cartridges. This groundbreaking collaboration offers users of Charles River's Endosafe ® bacterial endotoxin testing (BET) cartridge technology an avenue to responsibly recycle single-use plastic cartridges used specifically for routine water testing. The cartridge recycling program reaffirms Charles River's ongoing commitment to minimize the Company's environmental footprint and offer a service to assist clients in meeting their sustainability goals.

"We recognize that a typical quality control microbiology laboratory generates volumes of plastic waste during standard testing and monitoring," said Matthew Hewitt, PhD, Vice President and Chief Technical Officer, Manufacturing Business Division, Charles River. "This waste includes tips, plastic-based packaging, and consumables. In many cases, these are discarded as biohazardous waste, even when they pose minimal biological risk. This includes materials used in water testing. Our cartridge recycling program works to address this challenge by offering a path to recycle these cartridges, reduce waste, and ultimately support labs seeking to align their testing workflows and supply chains with sustainability goals."

More than 20 years ago, Charles River pioneered Endosafe Cartridge Technology, a microfluidic approach that reduced the amount of horseshoe crab-derived Limulus Amebocyte Lysate (LAL) required for each test by more than 95 percent. That work continued with the launch of Endosafe Trillium™, a recombinant cascade reagent (rCR), designed to meet global regulatory standards while supporting 3Rs initiatives. While cartridge-based testing already eliminates many sample preparation steps that rely on other single-use plastics, such as pipette tips and packaging, this new recycling program allows enrolled customers to return plastic cartridges used specifically for water testing and have them responsibly recycled.

"The scientific community has made tremendous strides in advancing both innovation and sustainability," said Tom Szaky, Founder and CEO of TerraCycle. "Yet laboratory settings still face a significant challenge, as most single-use plastics, designed for precision, ultimately end up as waste. Through this partnership with Charles River, we're providing a practical way to recycle a high-volume lab consumable that would otherwise be destroyed. By integrating resource recovery into lab operations, we're making it easier for science to align with sustainability."

This partnership with TerraCycle represents the next step in Charles River's broader sustainability efforts. The program will begin implementation in July, starting at Charles River's Microbial Solutions site in Charleston, South Carolina, where cartridges are manufactured. Cartridge customers in the United States and select European countries (Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Switzerland) can also enroll in the program beginning in July. Customers will receive a Zero Waste Box™ directly to their lab, collect cartridges used in the testing of water, which account for approximately 70 percent of global BETs, and return full boxes to TerraCycle. These will then be properly recycled and processed into raw materials that can be used to make new products, such as outdoor furniture, storage bins, park benches, and other durable goods. New boxes will be shipped automatically to support ongoing collection.

The effort comes at a time when sustainability expectations are rising across the industry. The European Union continues to implement measures to reduce single-use plastics in alignment with its Circular Economy Action Plan. Globally, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and United Nations (UN) are supporting coordinated action to curb plastic pollution. By targeting single-use plastics that are low risk but high volume, this program helps labs take measurable action today, without revising existing testing workflows.

About Charles River

Charles River provides essential products and services to help pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies, government agencies, and leading academic institutions around the globe accelerate their research and drug development efforts. Our dedicated employees are focused on providing clients with exactly what they need to improve and expedite the discovery, early-stage development, and safe manufacture of new therapies for the patients who need them. To learn more about our unique portfolio and breadth of services, visit www.criver.com.

About TerraCycle

TerraCycle is an international leader in innovative sustainability solutions, creating and operating first-of-their-kind platforms in recycling, recycled materials, and reuse. Across 21 countries, TerraCycle is on a mission to rethink waste and develop practical solutions for today's complex waste challenges. The company engages an expansive multi-stakeholder community across a wide range of accessible programs, from Fortune 500 companies to schools and individuals. To learn more about TerraCycle and join them on their journey to move the world from a linear economy to a circular one, please visit www.terracycle.com.

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