



# NEWSLETTER MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS



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## EDITORIAL

### Dear Readers,

Following the troubled start into 2011 in the light of the dioxin crisis, the QS scheme remains dedicated to dealing with the consequences that have arisen from it. As a result a number of additional decisions will need to be made in the advisory board meetings at the end of May (see page 2).

QS is also heavily involved in its coordinating role in the exit from piglet castration (see below).

Our range of communications services for food retail is also presented to you on page 2.

We present you information regarding the market in general, our audits of special purpose and training sessions. We also report on the fact that you can now follow us on Twitter (page 4).

### Your QS team

## EXIT FROM PIGLET CASTRATION EXAMINATION OF BOAR TAIN



**The use of painkillers for piglet castration has been mandatory within the QS scheme since 2009. In addition, QS has assumed a coordinating role during exit discussions that covers the entire industry and has brought representatives from business, science and politics together round a table to advise on practical methods for piglet castration.**

According to experts, the breeding of the entire male population is the most promising solution in order to complete the exit. Further research and solution approaches for the detection of boar taint are however required. This was the main conclusion to be drawn by the expert workshop which was hosted jointly by the Federal Ministry of Food, Agriculture and Consumer Protection and QS in November 2010 in Berlin.

Many areas are being researched, experimented and developed at present in order to develop technical procedures that will help to identify boar taint in the entire male production. There is not however any technical solution in sight that could be made ready for the market in a short period of time.

However, in order to be prepared for the desired exit from piglet castration, the economy is pushing for viable solutions.

One approach therefore is to train people in the slaughtering plant so that they can specifically detect boar taint. Such a proposal would also help to pursue the objective to harmonise requirements in slaughtering plants and to achieve a common standard. This is also something which is desired on an international basis for the market.

In terms of how training by experts at the abattoir might look, this must now be found out in a research project. Slaughtering plants, experts from science and QS are all currently initiating a study on this issue. The subject of the study should be under what conditions the human nose is able to accurately detect boar taint in entire males.

## DIOXIN CRISIS QS DRAWS FURTHER CONSEQUENCES

**Following the dioxin incidents at the start of the year, QS has tightened scheme requirements for the feed sector since 1 March 2011. At the same time, further steps were announced that are currently due to be implemented. The QS beef, veal and pork and poultry advisory boards will also advise on this at the end of May.**

From 1 July 2011, manufacturers of compound fats and oils that process fatty acids and mixed fatty acids must sample this particular feed before use. This is already set. It is currently being decided as to how exactly this release sampling should look: The plan is that it will also be valid in future for refined and distilled fatty acids as well as their salts, for crude coconut oil, for raw cocoa butter and for fish oil.

Further decisions have already been set in principle, meaning therefore that the traceability of feed should be improved. Provisions for the indi-

cation of VVVO numbers on shipping documents and in the documentation are also being developed. This is used for the unique identification of supplier addresses. Feed retailers and feed material producers should also be involved in the coordination meetings. In order to allow manufacturers time to make the necessary changes to inventory control systems, provisions have been made for the new regulation to start on 1 January 2012.

For critical production processes and high-risk products, this should be looked at in more detail in future. This includes a risk-oriented approach for the individual test schedules. In this context it is also called for a more risk-oriented evaluation of feed material included in the positive list. The Standards Commission will advise on this during their meeting in June 2011. Temporal provisions for the dispatch of samples to the laboratory and the entry of the analysis results in the QS database are both being considered

as well. A maximum submission deadline of ten working days is intended which companies and laboratories should be able to comply with.

The organisation of sampling of feed companies is examined in the independent audit. It is left to the companies to decide if they want the sampling to be carried out by independent samplers.

At the same time, QS also swaps ideas with international standard owners. Discussions are currently ongoing with GMP+ International. QS is calling for an adjustment and strengthening of provisions for the GMP audit. In an initial move, GMP+ has already decided on the release sampling of specific fats. During the course of the year, a number of additional requirements for plants that supply in the QS scheme should be included in the GMP+ guidelines. These requirements should include the definition of a crisis manager and the unique identification of QS products in future.

## BEEF CONTINUED STRONG DEMAND

**The demand for beef that bears the QS certification mark continues to be strong. In order to be able to meet the high market demand, QS has campaigned for further plants to join the QS scheme – and this has been a success.**

30,870 agricultural businesses with cattle farming currently belong to the QS scheme. Of those, almost 17,900 (approx. 58 percent) come from Bavaria. Approximately 28,350 additional businesses are eligible to deliver their cows via the recognition of QM Milk audits by QS in the QS scheme.



The total number of businesses has increased again by 500 in the first four months of this year alone. It is also becoming apparent that additional scheme participants, particularly in the

south-west of Germany, can be obtained for the QS scheme. Participation in the QS scheme is an attractive proposition for all cattle farmers. After all, beef with the QS certification mark is currently achieving up to EUR 0.05 extra per kilo of carcass weight within the market.

If this added revenue is taken as the mathematical basis, and assuming the average carcass weight is 350 kilograms per animal, the cost for participating in the QS scheme is typically recouped after the sale of only five slaughtered animals each year. Farmers should therefore apply due to potential price increases to their marketers.

## TEN YEARS OF QS: COMMUNICATIONS SERVICE FOR FOOD RETAIL

**2001  
10 JAHRE  
2011**

QS. Ihr Prüfsystem  
für Lebensmittel.

**More and more customers are looking for the QS certification mark when buying meat and sausages. In order to further promote the awareness of the certification mark as a purchasing aid, QS is treading the path of active customer and consumer responses in cooperation with food retail. It represents the liaison of the supply chain to the customer.**

QS is working continuously to further develop the service offering for communication regarding the QS certification mark. The „ToolBox“ comprises aids for employee training, tailor-

made information brochures and flyers. Specific measures and individual concepts are developed together with our partners in food retail. This currently includes individually designed anniversary activities to mark the tenth anniversary of QS, which underlines the long-term joint commitment to safe food.

The main focus of all communication efforts is to create transparency throughout all stages of production and marketing and beyond and to permanently increase trust in the responsibility chain. As a result, it is food from good sources.

## SALMONELLA PROGRAM ALL APPROVED TEST KITS ARE RELIABLE



**Until now, test kits made by two manufacturers were approved for the salmonella program within the QS scheme. An additional test kit has been added since January 2011.**

**All three are reliable and provide comparable results.**

This is something that now has been confirmed from scientific side.

Following the fact that users continued to raise the question as to whether the supply kits for the rapid test results were valid and comparable, the University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover has now confirmed that the selection of the test system has no influence on the outcome of the investigated sample.

After having been commissioned by QS, the University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover had

examined a significant number of meat juice and blood serum samples with the three test systems. The results of the comparative examination indicated a completely similar assessment of the samples irrespective of the test kit used.

The following test kits are approved in the QS scheme for the examination of salmonella antibodies: Salmotype PigScreen (manufacturer: Labor Diagnostik Leipzig), Herd Check (manufacturer: IDEXX, Wörrstadt) and PrioCheck Salmonella 2.0 ELISA (manufacturer: Prionics AG, Schlieren, Switzerland).

## SLAUGHTERING/DEBONING AUDITS OF SPECIAL PURPOSE 2011

**Whether scheme requirements such as traceability and animal welfare are being correctly complied with, is monitored by independent auditors during the course of regular audits. In addition, QS employees and special auditors will also conduct a range of unannounced audits of special purpose during 2011. But especially within audits of special purpose weaknesses are being discovered. Among others this will focus on slaughtering and deboning plants.**

The unannounced inspections add to the overall picture that is obtained during the regular audits. In most cases they merely confirm the assessments. This means that businesses that perform well in the regular audits also achieve good results in the audits of special purpose. However, more and more weaknesses are appearing in the audit of special purpose. The QS employees are making use of these additional visits in a targeted manner in order to determine any potential



improvements. This also helps to further develop the whole scheme and optimise processes.

An important inspection criterion for slaughtering is compliance with all animal welfare provisions. In the QS scheme, any animal welfare infringements are a K.O. criterion in the audits. If a K.O. criterion is determined then a complete regular audit must be conducted. Furthermore, a sanction procedure is then initiated against the company. This may lead through to exclusion from the QS scheme.

Along with animal welfare, traceability is also a central aspect that the special auditors of QS pay particular attention to. A rapid tracing back of the entire flow of goods is a key point for the quality assurance of food. This becomes particularly apparent in the event of a crisis. In this respect, the inspection of sales and purchases and the traceability of the flow of goods within a reasonable period of time are essential aspects of quality assurance.

## AUDITOR TRAINING SESSIONS SPRING 2011

**In the first four months of this year, eight auditor training sessions with more than 150 participants took place for the meat and meat products supply chain. The range of issues surrounding quality assurance across all stages is particularly wide-ranging.**

The training sessions are conducted by QS employees. In addition, experts give lectures based on their experience of specific issues. The focus of this year's auditor training sessions at the slaughtering/deboning stage is animal welfare during the slaughtering process. Due to the high level of importance of animal welfare, participation has been mandatory

since this year.

The auditors for the feed sector are informed about the introduction of the HACCP-concept as well as about the various legal principles within feed production. For auditors of the agricultural stage, an external expert gave a lecture on the issue of drugs and animal health.

Given that the QS training sessions are also used to exchange experiences, there has been extra emphasis placed on the handling of case studies since last year. By doing this, various issues are then discussed in a descriptive manner. This contributes to the harmonisation of audit results. The auditors pass a written test as proof of successful participation.







The annual report has been published on time for the annual press conference in the middle of May under the title “Ten years of quality assurance”.

Looking back to 2010 QS presents its annual report. By reviewing the results from the last five years, a slightly longer period of time was used for the analysis of the audit results – with positive trends and conclusions. Both the meat and meat products and fruit, vegetables and potatoes supply chains were illustrated in detail (as at March 2011). The report provides compact data and facts on the entire scheme in the Figures section.

The dioxin crisis at the start of 2011 is also an issue. As already hinted in the title of the publication, 2011 is an anniversary year for QS. Founded on 13 October 2001, QS will celebrate a round birthday in autumn 2011 and is currently “in its tenth year”.

A PDF download of the annual report can be obtained from the Media Centre at [www.q-s.de/en](http://www.q-s.de/en).

## SCHEME PARTICIPANTS AND MARKETS CURRENT FIGURES

The number of scheme participants in the meat and meat products supply chain has continued to increase in the first five months of 2011. Firstly, more than 10,000 participants from abroad belong to the QS scheme. In addition, the number of livestock transport companies has continued to increase as well. As at 1 May 2011, 1,601 livestock transport companies now belong to the QS scheme. The total number of cattle farmers that are eligible to deliver in the scheme is much higher than the statistics would suggest at first glance. If the various parties entitled to deliver via the QS Milk audits are included, there are an additional 28,000 businesses, meaning therefore that there are a total of 59,226 cattle farmers that supply beef in the QS scheme.

| Stage                                   | Total<br><b>109,753</b> | Of which outside Germany<br><b>10,097</b> |
|---|-------------------------|---|
| <b>Animal feed</b>                      | <b>3,216</b>            | <b>452</b>                                |
| - Feed material                         | 1,258                   | 155                                       |
| - Compound feed                         | 700                     | 254                                       |
| - Mobile feed milling and mixing plants | 537                     | 7   |
| - Trade, transport, storage             | 721                     | 386                                       |
| <b>Agriculture</b>                      | <b>80,792</b>           | <b>9,264</b>                              |
| - Cattle farming <sup>1</sup>           | 30,870                  | 6   |
| - Pig farming <sup>2</sup>              | 46,133                  | 7,774                                     |
| - Poultry production                    | 3,789                   | 1,484                                     |
| <b>Livestock transport</b>              | <b>1,601</b>            | <b>12</b>                                 |
| <b>Slaughtering/deboning</b>            | <b>421</b>              | <b>42</b>                                 |
| <b>Processing</b>                       | <b>275</b>              | <b>11</b>                                 |
| <b>Food Retail<sup>3</sup></b>          | <b>23,448</b>           | <b>316</b>                                |

<sup>1</sup> Additionally eligible to deliver cows for slaughter: 28,356 firms via QM milk auditing

<sup>2</sup> Additionally eligible to deliver on the basis of system recognition: 7,547 firms QSG (DK) and 2,193 Certus (B)

<sup>3</sup> Including 140 meat wholesalers

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### Two QS-special modules to be discontinued

The special modules „QS recognition for foreign feed material manufacturers“ and „QS recognition for importers“ shall expire at the end of 2011. From 2012, a recognised certification will therefore be essential in order to ensure that the integration and eligibility of delivery in the QS scheme is not interrupted.

### Markenlehrbrief appears



In order to provide support to food retail in education and training, QS has created a „Markenlehrbrief“ regarding „Quality assurance for fresh meat, sausages and ham“ in conjunction with the Deutscher Fachverlag. In it, retail employees are able to learn about the various quality assurance regulations in a manner that is easy to understand and which has direct practical

relevance. This can be ordered free of charge from Deutscher Fachverlag, Mediadidact, Tel. 069/7595-2212, [www.mediadidact.de](http://www.mediadidact.de).



### QS is tweeting

The QS scheme has expanded its communications spectrum and has sent its first tweets (Twitter-short messages). By doing so, QS

has entered the field of social media and has paved the way for the dissemination of information which is supervised by Christian H. Meyer. QS on Twitter: “QS\_System“ ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)).

### FAQs for the feed sector

Frequent questions posed by the feed sector about the QS scheme are now answered in the new „FAQs“ which are available on the Internet for this particular economic sector: [www.q-s.de](http://www.q-s.de)

### New publication – Salmonella in pigs

In order to meet the practical requirements for an effective reduction of salmonella better, the German Pig Health Service (Schweinegesundheitsdienst) has updated its advisory recommendations for the control of salmonella. The QS salmonella monitoring is an issue that is dealt with in the brochure. The publication can be obtained from the various regional Pig Health Services.

### IMPRINT

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