



NEWSLETTER MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS



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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

2011 started turbulently for QS and our scheme participants. The dioxin crisis came over the meat sector and affected not just scheme participants in the animal feed and abattoir sectors directly, but also hit farmers hard and even affected the retail trade.

The QS team concentrated with all our might in the first few weeks of January to master the crisis. This incident brings about consequences. Current initial information about these can be found

on this page. The knowledge gained as a result of the previous weeks has convinced us that we have established a scheme with our partners which works well. It works particularly well when it is necessary to trace the flow of goods as well as ensuring transparency and information throughout the entire supply chain. Opinions and other background topics can be found on the following pages.

Your QS team

THE DIOXIN INCIDENT QS INCREASES THE REQUIREMENTS – FOR MORE ANIMAL FEED SAFETY



Increased animal feed safety designed to better protect the subsequent parties in the chain.

The QS scheme increases the requirements made of the animal feed industry. In doing so, the economy within the QS scheme draws the consequences of the dioxin incident without delays. The changes agreed by the QS advisory boards are implemented immediately.

The guidelines for the animal feed industry and the animal feed monitoring are to be enhanced accordingly. As of March 1st 2011, these additional requirements will be valid within the QS scheme. A special monitoring plan will be introduced for feed fats and will focus on dioxin. All animal feed companies must strictly separate the flow of goods for animal feed and for other materials within their production systems. Secondary and recycling fats as well as collected fat (e.g. old cooking fats) may not be processed within the QS scheme.

Mixed fats/oil and mixed fatty acids may only be handled and processed in systems in which only food and animal feed are produced. Substances that are not determined or suitable for the food and animal feed sector may not be processed within the same systems.

Within the company, all information with regard to traceability must be available within four hours. In addition, information regarding traceability must be prepared and transferred electronically. Sanctions for violations against the QS requirements have been made more strict. Companies in the animal feed economy stage can be blocked immediately in the event of serious violations.

Another new factor is that, in the event of a dangerous situation occurring, companies may be blocked for up to four weeks not just two. The following change comes into force on July 1st 2011: Manufacturers that process mixed fats and oils or fatty acids and mixed fatty acids may only introduce their goods to the market if there is proof of the harmlessness with regard to health relevant parameters as supported by test results. This means that these specific feeds must be sampled prior to their use and tested for, among other things, dioxins, heavy metals and plant protection product residue. In addition, the advisory boards have agreed to further changes and the technical details for these are currently being worked on by the experts. When it comes to the following points, the advisory boards will be making concrete decisions during the meeting in May 2011: Optimization of the traceability thanks to the assignment of animal feed deliveries to VVO numbers of the farms, risk-oriented observation of further critical processes and products including the testing of the relevant monitoring plan, independent sampling as well as the optimization of the audit quality.

More information about the dioxin issues can be found under www.q-s.de/en

FOCUS ON DIOXIN ++ FOCUS ON DIOXIN ++ FOCUS ON DIOXIN ++

INTERVIEW: "WE NEED TO BE EVEN BETTER PREPARED IN FUTURE"

Guido Peter Siebenmorgen is group section head for freshness and production for the REWE GROUP in Cologne. As an expert, he advises QS in the beef, veal and pork advisory board with regard to food retail issues.

How did the dioxin crisis from January manifest itself in the retail trade?

The latest dioxin scandal was unfortunately something of a déjà vu situation for the food retail industry and the German retail trade as it was not the first animal feed scandal. And for precisely this reason, we need to carefully analyze the causes of the scandal and draw the correct consequences, both on the political side and the affected economic sector side. Here, I see QS taking on a leading role, since QS has both the expertise and also all the affected parties sitting at the same table. There are initial, good and correct steps being made towards ensuring that animal feed production is more transparent and better monitored. Once fats or other components have been removed from the food chain, they should not be smuggled back in through a back door, regardless of the legal situation. The retail trade has paid a high price for a problem



Guido Peter Siebenmorgen from the REWE GROUP in Cologne.

they did not cause because customers were afraid to purchase eggs and meat. With a time delay, this purchasing reticence will reach the remaining production stages. If we do not react quickly and appropriately, the topic will become more and more of a party-political game, but above all we run the risk of permanently destroying the image of the food retailers in the eyes of the public.

From your point of view, how does crisis management work with the suppliers?

In hindsight, I am not entirely happy with the crisis management. Some information arrived with a time delay and did not always ensure the necessary clarity. In individual instances, the consistent coordination of authorities and

quality assurance systems was lacking. Given the extreme complexity and the flow of goods, this is not surprising. The latest dioxin crisis has made us all look in the mirror and has showed us that we are able to better prepare for such crisis situations. This is the greatest opportunity afforded by the dioxin crisis which was, without doubt a scandal, but which from a scientific point of view was not a crisis, but was made into a crisis by some of the media. The current media fever temperature curve gives a good indication of what would happen if there was a real crisis with acute danger and the associated recalls.

How do you evaluate the role of QS in the crisis?

The dioxin crisis has clearly shown how important cross-stage quality assurance systems are to the economy. But it has also clearly shown that we are not making the full use of the potential that this offers. We must continue to work on this consistently. We must also further strengthen the trust of the customers in the QS scheme. This includes an open and understandable external image during a crisis. We are also well on our way to meeting this point well.

Dioxin incident: A chronological account of the start

December 22nd 2010: The mixed animal feed manufacturer Wulfa Mast GmbH from Dinklage sends QS an event notification: The dioxin thresholds had been exceeded in two samples of feed for laying hens. QS starts immediately with the search for the origin of the contamination.

December 27th 2010: The producer of feed fat Harles & Jentzsch from Uetersen informs QS of the increased dioxin content of a feed fat sample from November 11th 2010. QS immediately demands additional information with regard to the analysis and the supply flows. The feed fat is the source of the contamination at Wulfa Mast.

December 28th 2010: Research into causes continues to be the focus at QS even after the receipt of the written event notification on December 28th. According to the producer, authorities and experts it is an singular incident.

January 3rd 2011: QS receives from Harles & Jentzsch a list of 24 customers supplied with the affected batches and demands them to inform QS about their supply chain. The agricultural ministry in Lower Saxony blocks around 1,000 farms in Lower Saxony as a precaution.

January 4th 2011: QS traces the supply routes of potentially contaminated feed in order to identify affected farms early and to release unaffected farms from suspicion. Harles & Jentzsch is blocked and prevented from supplying into the QS scheme.

January 6th 2011: The Landesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit (State Office for Consumer Protection and Food Safety) carries out a risk assessment of the supplied companies in Lower Saxony. QS contributes the results of animal feed monitoring. On the basis of this investigation, the farms are sorted into risk groups.

January 10th 2011: Only 330 farms in Lower Saxony are still blocked from supplying into the QS scheme. QS has no further indications of dioxin-contaminated meat in the QS scheme. In the following days, the number of blocked farms could be reduced consistently. But two additional incidents prevented the situation from relaxing.

On **January 11th**, the Verden region announced exceeded dioxin thresholds during sample slaughtering of a pork producer. QS is able to narrow down the incident instantly. The nine affected farms in the QS scheme are blocked as a precaution. No goods are placed on the retail market.

On **January 15th**, media reports that the mixed animal feed producer LBG Damme has not informed the authorities about their supply relationships with 934 farms. As a result, QS subsequently carries out special audits at mixed feed companies in order to bring clarity to the situation. QS consistently works to unblock the farms. The first consequences in the QS scheme as a result of the current incident are already clear (see page 1).

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STATEMENTS **QS SCHEME**



Our farm was temporarily blocked by the veterinary authorities and by QS for delivery into the QS scheme. Obviously this is a terrible thing, particularly as we were affected albeit through no fault of our own. We started to worry considerably: What were we feeding the animals?

Peter Kruse,
farmer from Lower Saxony/NRW

Our farm was not affected by the blocks. Nevertheless we still received critical queries from various sources. It is outrageous that the criminal activities of a single feed supplier can create a crisis of these dimensions. As a pig producer this worries me. But, for this reason, I am glad I am part of QS. It is precisely these self-controls which uncovered the dioxin contamination and which, in the end, bring about increased safety for the entire chain.

Christian Schulze Bremer,
(keeper of sows and pig producer) Dülmen/NRW



The information requirement for VION customers both at home and abroad was very high after the extension of the precautionary blocks to the pork production sector. In the first few days, VION sent out several hundred statements to customers. The primary aim of these is to provide optimum information to our customers about the current facts in order to offer them as well-founded a basis as possible for them to use to make their, sometimes difficult, decisions. On the German market during this crisis, we noted a very sober-minded reaction of the food retail trade. Rash responses could be prevented thanks to transparent communication throughout the chain.



The crisis has again shown how important quality assurance schemes are and how dependant the individual product stages are on each other. Again, a crisis has been caused by criminal activity at the animal feed production stage. Here, measures must be taken to ensure that the systems are made even more safe. Specific suggestions are already available. Alongside stricter regulations in the QS scheme for the animal feed sector, the animal feed industry must improve both their supply management systems as well as ensuring their product liability.

Dr. Gereon Schulze Althoff,
Director Quality Assurance, VION Food Germany

Background:
What exactly is dioxin?

Dioxin is a collective name for polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB). The industrial use of this substance has been banned in Germany since 1989. Dioxin is, however, generated as a by-product of combustion processes (e.g. in metal industry plants, in waste incineration and private chimneys). Via the environment and primarily via animals it then gets into our food (meat, milk, eggs, fish). The longer animals are exposed to a dioxin source, the greater the amounts that collect in their

bodies. Since dioxin collects in fatty tissue, the amount of compounds in the organism will also depend on the proportion of fat in the animal. In the fatty tissue of animal and humans dioxin is able, among other things, to damage the immune system and the central nervous system. The Bundesamt für Verbraucherschutz und Lebensmittelsicherheit (State authority for consumer protection and food safety) has, on the basis of various monitoring programs, determined a reduction in the dioxin load placed on the population over the last few years.

The role of QS in the recent dioxin incident

QS scheme participant detects dioxin contamination:

The scheme works. Pollution was discovered and immediately reported to QS and the authorities.

Fast delimitation:

Through providing data from the feed monitoring, QS contributes to risk assessment. The traceability within the QS scheme helps to quickly identify affected farmers.

Factual information:

By means of cross-stage information QS contributes to clarity and clarification. The crisis management circle consisting of industry participants of all stages meets frequently and gets continuously informed; scheme participants of affected stages receive e-mail updates several times a day. Targeted public and media relations measures on the QS website, our consumer website and in exchange with the media (press releases, interviews, answering questions of journalists, scheme participants and consumers).

Explanation of facts:

QS acts consequently by immediately initiating special audits at Harles & Jentzsch GmbH, and later at the agricultural purchasing cooperative eG Damme and other compound feed producers. Furthermore, QS inspects the certification body and the certification against GMP+ Standard.

Sanctioning:

A sanction procedure against Harles & Jentzsch has been initiated and the scheme agreement has been terminated for good cause. Further sanction procedures have been initiated against compound feed producers.

With all these steps, QS made a fast contribution to loss limitation.

Quality Assurance. From farm to the shop.

INTERNATIONAL GREEN WEEK 2011 **START FOR COOPERATION OF LANDFRAUEN WITH QS**



At the trade fair stand, in conversation, are the member of the German Bundestag Alois Gerig and dlv presidium member Hannelore Wörz.

The Deutsche LandFrauenverband e.V. (German organization of country women) and QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH (QS) have star-

ted a joint cooperation project on nutrition and consumer education.

The QS consumer platform on the Internet is now being used for joint information projects. The proper treatment of food, questions with regard to freshness, storage, processing and hygiene are some of the topics covered.

The International Green Week offered the cooperation partners dlv and QS the ideal framework in which to present their cooperation. At the trade fair stand, visitors are first introduced to the QS consumer platform with the LandFrauen presence. "With the LandFrauen we are currently starting a specialist cooperation which is based on a transfer of knowledge when it comes to handling food. Our consumer homepage houses an essential element of the cooperation. There the

LandFrauen present themselves as experts when it comes to fresh foods," explains Dr. Hermann-Josef Nienhoff, managing director of QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH.

Brigitte Scherb, president of the Deutsche LandFrauenverband, adds: „We LandFrauen are focusing on educational offerings in schools and for adults in order to pass on basic every day competences as well as knowledgeable and conscious handling of food. LandFrauen promotes the dialog between producers and consumers and informs, during farm visits and on many other occasions, about modern food production. Here, quality, origin and processing of the products play a large role. This forms the link to QS.“

More about the cooperation can be found on our consumer page: www.qs-prüfsystem.de

SCHEME PARTICIPANTS AND MARKETS **CURRENT FIGURES**

When compared to the start of 2010, the number of scheme partners in the meat sector has increased by almost 6,000 new partners. Some 3,500 of these new scheme participants are from the farming industry.

In the fruit, vegetables and potato sector, the overall number of scheme participants rose to 22,841. In total, the QS scheme now has 132,295 scheme participants both at home and abroad.

Stage	Total 109,454	Of which outside Germany 9,843
Animal feed	3,114	429
- Feed material	1,224	119
- Compound feed	700	265
- Mobile milling/mixing equipment	534	7
- Retail, transport, storage	656	38
Agriculture	80,677	9,031
- Cattle farming ¹	30,950	7
- Pig farming ²	46,000	7,569
- Poultry farming	3,727	1,455
Livestock transport	1,506	10
Slaughtering/deboning	431	45
Processing	278	12
Foodstuffs retailing³	23,448	316

¹ Additionally entitled to deliver cows for slaughter: 28,071 firms via QM milk auditing

² Additionally entitled to deliver on the basis of system recognition: 7,601 firms QSG (DK) and 2,177 Certus (B)

³ Including 140 meat wholesalers

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Results of the ring trials for salmonella monitoring 2010

In December 2010, the results of the QS ring trials for salmonella monitoring in pigs were released. A total of 42 laboratories took place, of these 34 were QS recognized. Of all the laboratories in the test, 38 were successful and delivered the correct results for the ten samples with differing antibody content. There were deviations in two of the QS laboratories. Both laboratories were asked to implement measures for improvement and they must also take part in the next ring trials in fall of 2011 in order to keep their QS recognition.

QS at the Fleischkongress 2011

The 19th German Fleischkongress (meat congress) will take place on February 23rd Königswinter near Bonn. At the grand industry event for the German meat industry, QS will be participating in the lecture offerings. Congress visitors will be able to find out about current measures in lectures and forums and exchange information. Part of the framework program is the awarding of the Marketing prizes and the Fleisch Stars 2011 (meat stars).

Livestock transportation is now a part of the scheme

As of January 1st, 2011 livestock transporters who wish to transport QS animals must themselves

be scheme partners. With in excess of 1,500 certified transporters, comprehensive market coverage is ensured for the scheme supply chain. QS scheme participants can now ensure that the chain is not broken when transporting livestock.

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