

QS-Report Meat and Meat Products 02/2019



Content

- New indicators for more animal welfare and biosecurity
- Antibiotic use in livestock farming in decline
- Collection of diagnostic data from beef cattle
- QS Science Funds
- QS in dialogue with the industry
- Short and up to date

Editorial

Dear readers,

Biosecurity index, livestock farming index, German Medicinal Products Act - the issues covered by QS are extensive and are always aligned with the current agenda of the industry.

In this autumn issue of the QS Report we present the new QS indices for biosecurity and livestock farming. How these can be helpful for your risk assessment within the framework of the new EU Control Regulation is explained in our cover story.

And what about the use of antibiotics in German stables? The QS Antibiotics Monitoring as well as the Evaluation Report on the German Medicinal Products Act (also known as Arzneimittelgesetz or AMG) confirm a positive trend, and thus a declining use of antibiotics in livestock farming in recent years.

Many further topics also await you in this issue. We hope you enjoy reading it!

Your QS-Team

If you consider that we forgot any important topics related to quality assurance, please let us know!

We look forward to your suggestions.

New indicators for more animal welfare and biosecurity

Indices support in the risk assessment for new EU Control Regulation

The QS inspection system stores large amounts of data - among other things, from the numerous audit reports. Since November, QS has made this available to its scheme participants in an even clearer and more extracted form - as valid indicators for their own companies. They provide the farmer with comparative values and an early warning system. At the same time, the livestock owners can use their own values for risk assessment towards the veterinary offices. A benefit in terms of information and transparency through available data from several points of view.

In the QS database, every livestock owner has access to the results of the audits that are regularly carried out in his/her own farm. However, the overall audit result by itself often does not allow to draw any conclusions regarding the implementation of the criteria in the different areas of the company. Therefore, QS has defined special indices. Project Manager **Thomas May**, who works for QS, explains: **“We have extracted and highlighted individual aspects from the various data in the audit reports. Our aim is to provide indicators for each individual company, which will serve the farmer or his veterinarian not only as a comparative figure, but also as an early warning system.”**

As the focus currently lies on biosecurity and livestock farming, all requirements from the QS audit report relating to biosecurity and livestock farming are separately evaluated and summarised. Since November, livestock owners in the QS network are able to view their farm-specific biosecurity and livestock farming index in the database at any time.

ASF AND LIVESTOCK FARMING IN FOCUS

African Swine Fever (ASF) is presenting important challenges for pig farmers, as a high level of biosecurity is important for preventing the introduction of germs into the herd. The biosecurity index can provide some support in this sense: an index value of less than 100 indicates the possible need for action for farm managers. The same applies to livestock farming. Again, the requirements should be fully implemented to provide good housing conditions for the pigs. The audit indices on biosecurity and livestock farming help to identify even more easily whether and where action is required, as well as to react in good time.

NEW EU CONTROL REGULATION INCLUDES RISK CATEGORIES

However, the indices developed by QS do not only provide farmers and veterinarians with a more compre-

hensive picture of the situation on a farm. They can also provide transparency towards the veterinary offices. This is an advantage under the new EU Control Regulation 2017/625, which comes into force in December. This means that official controls, including on farms, must be risk-oriented and carried out at an appropriate frequency. All information about a farm is relevant for the risk assessment. And for this purpose, the authorities can also use the audit indices. Therefore, the higher the

biosecurity and livestock farming indices, the lower the risk category in which the veterinary office classifies the farm. This will also define the frequency of the official inspections. An access through the QS database is generally possible and already used today by 11 veterinary offices in North Rhine-Westphalia, Lower Saxony and Baden-Württemberg. Of course, the access is only possible, if the livestock owner authorises QS or the coordinator to release the information for the authority. ■



Antibiotic use in livestock farming in decline

QS Antibiotics Monitoring and German Medicinal Products Act Evaluation Report confirm positive trend

Since 2014, the use of antibiotics in livestock farming has steadily declined and the resistance situation has also improved. This is the conclusion reached by both the Status Report QS Antibiotics Monitoring published by QS in June 2019 and the Evaluation Report on the 16th Amendment to the Medicinal Products Act (also known as Arzneimittelgesetz oder AMG) published in the same month by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL for its initials in German). Both reports attest farmers and veterinarians a fewer and more careful use of antibiotics, as well as an increasing sensitivity to the subject.

When the amendment of the AMG entered into force in 2014, the Federal Government established an antibiotic reduction plan. Five years later it appears that the measures are taking effect: according to the Evaluation Report, the amount of antibiotics sold by pharmaceutical companies to veterinarians fell by 57 percent between 2011 and 2017. At the same time, the amount of active ingredients used in the six livestock groups (rearing piglets, fattening pigs, broilers, fattening turkeys, fattening calves and beef cattle for fattening) decreased from 298 (2nd half of 2014) to 204 tons (2nd half of 2017). The figures from the QS Antibiotics Monitoring also show a similarly positive picture. Between 2014 and 2018, the recorded amount of antibiotics applied in QS farms fell by a total of 253.2 tons, which corresponds to a reduction of 35.7 percent.

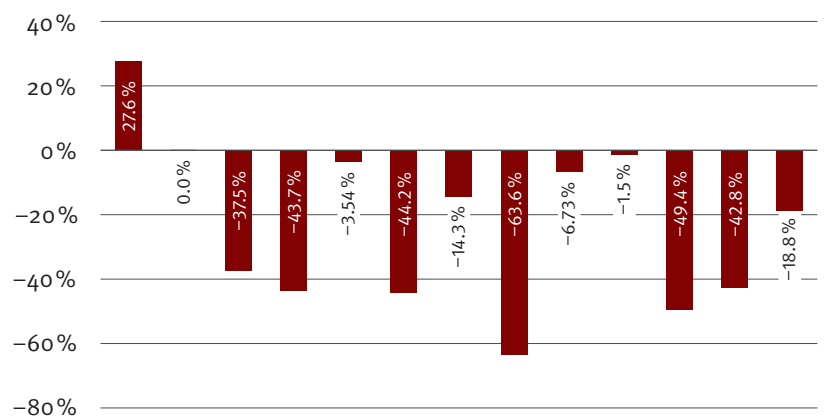
USE OF RESERVE ANTIBIOTICS: NO SHIFT TO PREVIOUS STAGES

The AMG Evaluation Report also shows that there are positive effects with regard to the resistance situation of selected bacteria in the analysed user groups. Nonetheless, the BMEL estimates that, due to several factors, the development of resistance can only be precisely foreseen after three to five years. The figures from the QS Antibiotics Monitoring also outline a significant decline in the use of antibiotics, but also of reserve antibiotics (critical antibiotics) in livestock

farming. Moreover, they reject the presumption expressed in the Evaluation Report, that there had been a shift to previous stages. Thomas May, responsible for the QS Antibiotics Monitoring since 2012 explains: **“In contrast to the state HIT database, the QS Antibiotics Monitoring System also collects the quantities applied in sows and suckling pigs. According to our figures, this is not an increase, but rather a decrease. In this way we can rule out the**

BMEL’s assumption that the use of antibiotics has been transferred to previous stages.”

At the same time, the antibiotics reduction measured by the QS Antibiotics Monitoring was significantly higher for broilers (-14.7%) and turkeys (-25.2%), than the figures presented in the AMG Evaluation Report (see figure). This is also due to the fact, that the companies participating in the QS scheme have been working intensively with antibiotic reduction for some time now. ■



	2014 (t)	7.51	0.00	4.11	0.84	4.80	28.7	61.8	0.11	3.42	39.8	5.99	17.3	174.4
	2018 (t)	9.58	0.00	2.57	0.49	4.63	16.0	53.0	0.04	3.19	39.2	3.03	9.90	141.6
Aminoglycosides														
Cephalosporins 1./2./3./4. Gen.														
Fluoroquinolones														
Folic acid antagonists														
Lincosamides														
Macrolides														
Penicillins														
Phenolics														
Pleuromutlins														
Polypeptides														
Sulfonamides														
Tetracyclines														
Total														

Fig. Comparison of antibiotic quantities (in tons) in poultry, according to active substance groups for 2014 and 2018

Collection of diagnostic data in beef cattle

Pilot project starts at the end of 2019

Since 2018, all poultry and pig abattoirs have been reporting their findings to the QS diagnostic database. Starting next year, QS also plans to centrally collect the diagnostic data of beef cattle abattoirs. For the time being, QS is in consultation with the industry representatives as to which findings should be collected and used to calculate an animal health index for beef cattle. A pilot project to be launched at the end of 2019 should be carried out in several beef cattle abattoirs, that allows to draw further conclusions regarding the criteria, the implementation and the technical requirements for the data collection and transmission. Slaughter diagnostic data provide important information on animal diseases to veterinarians and livestock owners, thus representing essential indicators on animal welfare and animal health in the farms. ■



QS Science Funds

Boot swab samples suitable for verifying surface disinfection in poultry houses

The cleaning and disinfection of livestock stables (see figure) are important hygiene measures to prevent the transmission of pathogens, zoonotic agents or resistant bacteria from a previous run to the next production cycle through contamination. For QS companies, it is obligatory to properly clean and disinfect poultry houses, facilities and equipment between destocking and reoccupation. In Germany, there are currently no standards available for checking the success of cleaning and disinfection measures in livestock farming. In a research

project, the University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover has investigated various procedures for the assessment of cleaning and disinfection measures.

The “Boot swab sample” project, supported by the QS Science Funds, had two main objectives: to test whether the boot swab sample is suitable for safely testing the cleaning and disinfection of livestock stables and whether it can function as a rapid test in livestock stables. With the help of the boot swab sample, large areas can be easily walked on and

stables can be sampled quickly. A quick test enables the success of cleaning and disinfection measures almost in real time and directly on site without sending samples to laboratories. The results of the project show that the boot swab sample is suitable for demonstrating the cleaning and disinfection success in poultry houses. However, on structured surfaces, such as slatted floors in pig stables, the method is less suitable because microbial contamination in the slats is not detected. The evaluated rapid test proved not to be applicable for several reasons. Project manager PD Dr. Schulz pleads for the further development and evaluation of alternative rapid tests. Within the project, a high bacterial load was partially detected even after cleaning and disinfection measures in the stables. Practical rapid tests could promptly point out further need for action in order to further improve hygiene in livestock farming. The final version of the project including all results can be found here (only available in German): www.q-s.de/Abschlussbericht-Sockentupferprobe ■



QS in dialogue with the industry

Anuga 2019 and Co.

The world's largest trade fair of the food industry, Anuga, took place in Cologne at the beginning of October. Under the motto “QS - More than the standard. Together in the market.” invited QS to its newly designed booth in Hall 6.

The QS booth offered the perfect platform to enter into dialogue with the industry. Along with the industry-wide agreement on animal welfare and the labelling of the farming systems - Haltungsform, the future of the meat industry was a central topic in the numer-

ous conversations held. Experts from the Initiative Tierwohl and Haltungsform.de were also represented. QS Managing Director **Dr. Hermann-Josef Nienhoff: “The open dialogue with our partners and other industry representatives at Anuga provided important impulses. Only together we will be able to further improve the good standards and achieve more for the industry.”** Specially for Anuga, QS had developed an interactive theme universe, which visitors to the fair could use to inform themselves about

all areas of the QS inspection system - from the ASF risk traffic light to certification. However, the undisputed highlight of the event was the traditional “Blue Hour”, which took place on Monday evening at the QS booth. Here, business partners and co-exhibitors were able to round off the third day at Anuga with blue cocktails, selected delicacies and interesting conversations.

ICOMST AND FORUM DER FLEISCHWIRTSCHAFT – QS REPRESENTED AS SPONSOR WITH INFOSTAND

Other event highlights in the second half of the year included QS's participation in the International Congress of Meat Science and Technology (ICoMST) in Potsdam, as well as the Forum der Fleischwirtschaft

in Quakenbrück. At the ICoMST (4 – 9 August 2019), QS was represented for the first time with an information stand and also acted as sponsor of the event. The congress, which was held this year under the motto “Meat for diversifying markets”, offered the participants a broad program with several presentations, workshops and panel discussions on current topics from the entire supply chain.

As a sponsor, QS also supported this year’s edition of the Forum der Fleischwirtschaft, which took place on 4 and 5 September 2019. At the industry meeting of the meat and meat product industry, annually organised by the journal Allgemeine Fleischer Zeitung (afz), experts discussed the topics of digitisation, animal welfare, the new packaging law and current product trends. ■

QS events calendar 2020

- ▶ **17. to 26.01.2020**
Internationale Grüne Woche, Berlin
- ▶ **19.02.2020**
28th Deutscher Fleischkongress, Königswinter
- ▶ **19. to 27.09.2020**
Bayerisches Zentral-Landwirtschaftsfest, München
- ▶ **21.11.2020**
Bpt Congress 2020, Hannover

Short and up to date

FOOD RETAIL: ADD-ON MODULE FOR ONLINE TRADING

From 1 January 2020, an additional module for online trading will be available in the QS scheme. The module can be optionally selected by the QS scheme participants in the database. The specific requirements are then checked as part of the QS audits. The additional module is aimed at scheme participants who offer QS products predominantly via online trading. Accordingly, the QS checklists and guidelines for the food retail will be revised next year. Therefore, the online trade will no longer be published in the guidelines, but in a corresponding annex. ■

SLAUGHTERING/DEBONING: QS SUPPORTING DOCUMENT FOR LISTERIA PREVENTION RECEIVES HIGH RESONANCE

In the middle of the year, QS published a supporting document for listeria prevention, which assists scheme participants in the stages of slaughtering, deboning and processing in assessing the risk of listeria in their own companies, as well as in the implementation of suitable prevention measures. The supporting document is available to the QS scheme participants on the QS website free of charge for download. To date, the document has been downloaded more than 2,800 times. An English version will also be published soon. For **Dr. Marcus Langen** of Dr. Berns Laboratorium GmbH und Co. KG, the QS supporting document also represents a

valuable assistance for companies in the prevention of listeria: **“The QS supporting document contains in compact form a series of useful information about *Listeria monocytogenes* and provides practical, viable recommendations for the prevention of listeria. The reports of the last few months clearly show how important it is for food business operators not to deal with this issue only in times of crisis”.** ■



WAREHOUSES FOR MEAT PRODUCTS: QS RECOGNIZES BRC GLOBAL STANDARD FOR FOOD SAFETY

Since August 2019, QS recognizes the BRC Global Standard for Food Safety as an equivalent standard for storage companies of meat and meat products. The recognition avoids unnecessary additional work through double audits and ensures a higher degree of practicability for the storage companies. Additionally, the standards IFS Logistics, IFS Food, IFS Wholesale/Cash & Carry and BRC Storage & Distribution are recognized in the QS scheme for the storage of meat and meat products. ■

FEED: ICRT CONDUCTS ONLINE SURVEY ON THE IDTF DATABASE

With the International Database Transport for Feed (IDTF), the International Committee Road Transport (ICRT) has set up a database which summarizes the minimum cleaning requirements of seven international certification standards (Qualimat, OVOCOM, GMP+ International, EFISC-GTP, AIC, AMA and QS) for the road transport of feed. In order to further optimize the database for its users, the ICRT will conduct an online survey this year. Your feedback is important to us! ■

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