



# INFO LETTER MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS



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## EDITORIAL

### Dear Readers,

Summer 2011 has been crammed full of important developments for the QS Scheme up to now. A lot has been going on in the feed sector with regard to international cooperation, such as the expansion of recognition between QS and GMP+ and intensification of cooperation with other standard owners (see articles on Page 2).

The lessons learned from the dioxin crisis are to come into effect in a second stage: the new

guidelines for feed monitoring have been in force since 1 July (see Page 3).

The quality assurance expert from McDonald's talks in an interview about bonus payments for QS-tested beef (see Page 2), and the University of Göttingen presents the study on entire male taint commissioned by QS – with some interesting findings for the sector (Page 3).

We wish you interesting and informative reading and an equally interesting summer.

**Your QS Team**

## BEEF DEMAND SCHEME PARTICIPANTS AND QS COMMIT THEMSELVES



**The high demand for beef is not a flash in the pan. The trend appears to be continuing, because the market demand for beef is still very high. The call for products with the QS certification mark in particular is undiminished. To meet this demand, more and more scheme participants are taking the initiative and encouraging participation in the QS Scheme.**

The latest examples from slaughtering and marketing businesses show how the market is urging for QS-tested cattle. Accordingly, QS scheme participants are advertising in their own publications just how easy it is for farmers to register in the QS Scheme.

This increasing demand is counterbalanced by a German market which cannot fully meet it,

especially as production figures are dropping at the moment. The market is reacting to this among other things by publishing "QS prices" for slaughtering cattle. Accordingly, the State Office for Nature, Environment and Consumer Protection in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia has been publishing cattle prices since July 2011 separated by "with" and "without QS". The agricultural weekly for the Westphalia-Lippe district has taken over this form of separation since August. Currently, 4 additional cents per kilo are being paid for QS bulls. Depending on the grade, between 60 and 90 percent of bulls in NRW are quality assured with QS. The latest example of QS's European and international cooperation is Ireland, with negotiations currently being held between the Irish standard Bord Bia and QS on the production stages Agriculture and Slaughtering/Deboning.

The principal of cross-stage quality assurance applies here too, of course, and the integration of the entire value-added chain is an essential part of the discussions. Feed and livestock transport would also have to be integrated into the chain. For the latest participant numbers, see [www.q-s.de/en](http://www.q-s.de/en).

## Quality Assurance. From farm to shop.

### McDONALD'S QUALITY ASSURANCE IN SYSTEM GASTRONOMY



**Interview partner Heike Bierweiler is a quality assurance expert at McDonald's head office in Munich. She answers some questions on the company's quality assurance strategy.**

#### **What strategies does McDonald's pursue in the quality assurance of meat?**

McDonald's requires around 44,000 tonnes of beef every year for its restaurants in Germany. Over 90% of the raw material, which consists mainly of the forequarters of dairy cows, comes from roughly 90,000 small and medium-sized farms in Germany. McDonald's procures available meat from quality systems such as QS and we consciously support QS too. Among other things, we pay a bonus for meat with QS certification through our pre-suppliers/abattoirs. Our goal is to increase the percentage of produce

from quality systems from its current level of approx. 60 percent and that is why we support QS in its external communication.

#### **How do you assess the current market situation with regard to raw material?**

We currently see ourselves confronted with a limited raw materials market. McDonald's prime objective is to acquire sufficient raw material for our basic minced beef burgers, which are known as patties. At the same time, the origin and production methods of our beef are of great importance to us and our guests. This gives us good reason to focus on good agricultural practices. The use of raw materials from quality assurance systems helps us here to protect our supply chain and support the farmers.

#### **Why does McDonald's place so much emphasis on quality standards?**

High quality standards and production safety are fundamental for the trust of our guests. We can only achieve this by having independent checks conducted along the entire production chain. QS and its partners guarantee us these external controls in the primary supply chain.

Participation in systems such as QS doesn't only mean the inspection of a business, however. Quality standards aren't statistical rules, they are there to further develop agricultural practices and adapt them to a constantly changing market. It goes without saying that regular self-assessment and independent external certification are conducted at all of our supplier businesses and in our restaurants. By doing so, we continue to give our 2.7 million daily guests in Germany a good and safe feeling when they come to us to eat.

### ANIMAL FEED GMP+ AND QS EXPAND THEIR MUTUAL RECOGNITION



**On 29 June 2011, Dutch company GMP+ International and QS signed a new agreement on**

**the mutual recognition of their respective animal feed standards, thus considerably expanding the scope of the existing recognition.**

In addition to the agreement on the recognition of feed production, which has been in force since 2006, the new recognition agreement, which comes into force with immediate effect, covers the trade, transport, storage and handling of feeds. Crop farming is also included in the bilateral agreement.

With this recognition, GMP+ or QS-certified businesses can save the time and money required for double auditing. In order to use the recognition system, QS-certified businesses that want to provide products and services to GMP+-certified businesses must register with GMP+ International and vice-versa.

The agreement that has now been reached is the result of the coordination efforts of both standard owners over the past few years. The contract signed between QS and GMP+ International constitutes another step towards the harmonization of internationally valid quality standards. Both standard owners intend to continue on this course in future.

More on this subject in the internet: [www.q-s.de/en](http://www.q-s.de/en).



**Dr. Hermann-Josef Nienhoff, QS Managing Director and his counterpart at GMP+ International, Johan den Hartog, at the contract signing at the end of June.**

### ANIMAL FEED INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE AMONG STANDARD OWNERS

**A meeting of the European standard owners for the feed industry took place on 29 June 2011 in the Dutch city of Venlo. Representatives of GMP+ International (Netherlands), Ovocom (Belgium), AIC (UK) and QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH discussed the respective consequences of the dioxin occurrences at the beginning of the year.**

In concrete terms, it involved the presentation of measures already introduced and implemented

and further developments planned for the future. The discussions also covered the founding of a joint HACCP work group to identify critical processes and products.

Talks were also held on a joint and closely coordinated procedure for dealing with these defined processes and products, the development of a joint negative list for a complete ban of certain critical products and the improvement

of communication in crisis situations. Ways are also to be sought as to how auditors and certification bodies can be sensitized especially for critical processes and products. All four standard owners agree that they should share their respective national experiences and cooperate closely in the future too in order to guarantee the country-to-country comparability and acceptance of the systems.

## FEED MONITORING GUIDELINE CHANGES SINCE 1 JULY 2011



**As a consequence of the dioxin occurrences at the beginning of the year, after the initial measures that were implemented on 1 March 2011, additional actions to increase**

**feed safety have now been decided. The revised Feed Monitoring Guideline came into effect on 1 July 2011.**

The essential changes are as follows: Expansion of mandatory release testing to include the feed materials refining and distillation fatty acids (and their salts), virgin coconut oil and raw cacao butter, as well as fish oil (obligatory as a KO criterion). The time limits prescribed for feed analysis are also new: a maximum period of ten working days (recommendation) between the drawing of a sample and submission to a laboratory and/or results of the analysis and

entering of analysis results in the QS database should be complied with. A sector-specific control plan for fish and other marine animals and their products and by-products has also been newly integrated into the guideline. This means that the previously prepared company-specific control plans are no longer valid. The affected producers must comply with the control plan published in the guideline from 1 July 2011.

These and all other changes are included in the revision information on the Feed Monitoring Guideline: [www.q-s.de/en](http://www.q-s.de/en).

## SENSORY RESEARCH STUDY REPORT ON YOUNG BOAR MEAT

**In 2010, QS commissioned the Georg-August University in Göttingen to perform research on the sensory function of entire male meat. Their report with the title "Risk Assessment of Discontinuing Castration" has now been presented.**

As far as we know at the moment, skatole and androstenone are the two decisive substances that give entire male meat its specific odour. The sensory research study conducted by the University of Göttingen came up with the following findings on this:

Skatole is perceived as more strongly smelling and much more unpleasant than androstenone and for this reason, the main focus should be on reducing skatole levels. Because skatole levels can be influenced by breeding, farming and feeding methods, it is possible to achieve an unproblematic level.

Despite high concentrations of androstenone, chops and salami made from entire male meat are widely accepted and are positively app-



raised in regard to their taste and smell. Entire male meat with a high level of fat (minced meat) is only appraised negatively if it has a very high concentration of androstenone. No difference can be perceived after cooking (finished minced meat sauce).

Negative experiences with odours of this kind do not play a permanent role: the appraisal of the minced meat is not influenced by repetition. This risk of a negative assessment by consumers is further reduced because only some

of them can smell the androstenone. Add to this the fact that meat and/or minced meat is not usually eaten without seasoning (masking effect). Variability among humans is comparatively high and the individual perception and assessment of odours remains, even after intensive training. Trained test persons are able to detect differences in the intensity of the odours of androstenone and skatole, which means that it is possible to gauge the intensity of these odours in the abattoir.

The results show that the consumer and expert studies have produced valuable findings which are necessary for the appraisal of entire male meat. In this way, the research work helps to enable the value-added chain to draw conclusions concerning the discontinuation of the castration of piglets. The approach that the coordination platform "Discontinuation of Piglet Castration" pursued with the recommendation for this research work has therefore been implemented successfully.

## FOOD RETAIL QS SUPPORTS ON-SITE STAFF TRAINING

**Staff at the QS head office provide support to the information and training of food retail personnel with material – and now they are also doing it live.**

All of the employees in the food retail sector receive training in many areas at least once a year. Because issues concerning quality assurance and hygiene play a very important role here, QS provides comprehensive information and supports these training measures specifically with material on the QS certification mark and all that it entails.

Because QS is well accepted by consumers thanks to well-trained personnel in retail outlets, head office staff go out of their way to help and recently travelled

to beautiful Saxony to provide information about QS to the heads of department in a three-hour training course. The compact information and opportunity to learn more about the certification mark and all that it involves in a personal discussion were well received by the Saxon executives.

Robert Römer, responsible for Food Retail, Slaughtering and Processing at QS, conducted the training and was pleased with the results: "I was delighted with the active discussion of examples from quality assurance departments. There is a huge demand for information and it was great that we could be there".

If you are interested in staff training in Food Retail from QS, please contact: [robert.roemer@q-s.de](mailto:robert.roemer@q-s.de).



QS ANNIVERSARY: TENTH BIRTHDAY ACTIVITIES

**2001**  
**10 JAHRE**  
**2011**

QS. Ihr Prüfsystem für Lebensmittel.

Ten years after its establishment, the QS Test Scheme will be celebrating its birthday at its place of foundation: the Anuga trade fair. Dead on time for the anniversary of the founding of the company on 13 October 2001, QS will be represented there in 2011 with its own fair stand. A warm welcome is extended to all readers to visit the QS stand at the Anuga fair in Cologne from 8 to 12 October.

The anniversary is also being celebrated beyond the trade fair, with scheme participants from the

food retail sector congratulating QS in advertisements and flyers. The food magazine has adopted quality assurance as the "mega trend 2011". And it goes without saying that the anniversary will be a topic in our media too this autumn, be it in the internet, on the consumer website or in the Info Letter.

It's not all about celebrating our own achievements, however, as Managing Director Dr. Hermann-Josef Nienhoff points out: "We see the developments of the first ten years of QS quite clearly as the achievement of our scheme participants, who give their full backing to economy-supported, cross-stage quality assurance".

SCHEME PARTICIPANTS AND MARKETS CURRENT FIGURES

The number of scheme participants in the entire Meat and Meat Products chain has now reached almost 110,000, of whom 164 were recently added to the Feed stage via the new system recognition of the GMP+ standard (more on this in the article on Page 2).

Another new development on the Feed stage is that the manufacturers of additives and pre-mixes are now part of the supply chain in the QS Scheme.

Among cattle farmers, the number of participants totalled 59,350 in August 2011 if the businesses eligible to deliver via QM-Milch are included. A total of 623 cattle farming businesses with delivery eligibility have joined the QS Scheme in this way. In January, the total including QM-Milch cattle farmers was 58,727.

Stage	Total <b>109,855</b>	Of which outside Germany <b>10,244</b>
<b>Feed</b>	<b>3,347</b>	<b>470</b>
- Additive and premix production	7	2
- Feed materials	1,271	162
- Compound feed	693	243
- Mobile feed milling and mixing plants	536	7
- Trading, Transport, Storage	840	56
<b>Agriculture</b>	<b>80,774</b>	<b>9,394</b>
- Cattle farming <sup>1</sup>	30,791	6
- Pig farming <sup>2</sup>	46,138	7,876
- Poultry production	3,845	1,512
<b>Livestock transport</b>	<b>1,613</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Slaughtering/deboning</b>	<b>399</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Processing</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Food Retail<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>23,448</b>	<b>316</b>

<sup>1</sup> Additionally eligible to deliver for slaughtering cattle: 28,599 businesses via QM-Milch auditing  
<sup>2</sup> Additionally eligible to deliver on the basis of system recognition: 7,509 businesses via QSG (DK) and 2,201 via Certus (B)  
<sup>3</sup> Including 140 meat wholesale businesses

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**EU supports information campaign**

In June, the EU Commission approved an information campaign for consumers

in which QS is to provide information on all aspects of food security. The most important medium here will be the internet, where social media channels are to be used intensively to make cross-stage quality assurance even more understandable to young consumers, as well as families and other interested parties. Preparations for the campaign are to run from autumn 2011 and the actual start of the campaign is scheduled for spring 2012.



**QS at the World Pork Conference**

The World Pork Conference is being held in Bonn this year from 6 to 7 October 2011. This international conference casts an eye on the world market for pork. Questions concerning growth markets and development potential will be discussed with experts from all over the world and issues concerning quality assurance and the development of international standards will also be on the programme. You will find info on the conference in the internet at: [www.worldpork-conference.com](http://www.worldpork-conference.com).

**Random sample audits to start in September**

Random sample audits are to be conducted from September to November 2011. Companies are to be selected at random and notified no



sooner than 24 hours before the audit. The time required for the audit is less than that required for a regular audit because selected criteria are specifically examined. The focus could be on crisis management, for example, as well as animal welfare during slaughtering, and hygiene.

**IMPRINT**

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