



NEWSLETTER MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS



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EDITORIAL

Dear readers,

Two topics in particular seem to be occupying the meat industry this Autumn: workable sustainability strategies and ways to avoid castrating piglets.

QS has formed a dedicated work group to tackle the sustainability debate in order to steer the topic beyond island solutions towards meta-industry concepts. Finding alternatives to piglet castration had a major platform in November with a workshop run jointly by BMELV and QS in Berlin. An up-to-date report on the event can be found below.

Other topics in this issue are the increasing demand for beef and livestock transport regulations (Interview on Page 3). In all modesty, we also mention the praise received from consumer protectionists: in our news in brief section (Page 4) we quote the head of the consumer advice centres who regards the QS scheme as exemplary.

These and other topics can be found on the following pages.

Your QS team

EXPERT WORKSHOP RUN BY BMELV AND QS: ABANDONMENT OF PIGLET CASTRATION



Over 200 experts followed the final discussion on November 11th in Berlin.

An abandonment of piglet castration is approaching. Specialists believe that rearing the entire population of young boars is the best way to permanently abandon the practice of castrating male piglets without anaesthesia right across the board. That is the main conclusion reached by the expert workshop „Abandonment of piglet castration – status and perspectives“ held by the Federal Minis-

try for Nutrition, Agriculture and Consumer Protection together with QS Qualität und Sicherheit GmbH on November 11th, 2010 in Berlin.

Over 200 scientists, politicians, veterinary surgeons and representatives of animal welfare, consumer protection, agriculture, the meat industry and the foodstuffs retailing trade discussed the status of the research and development of alternatives

to the currently common practice of piglet castration during the one-day conference. It became clear that great progress has been made in the last two years in the scientific findings and much practical experience has been gained. In addition, it was repeatedly emphasised that the coordination work by QS was of benefit to the industry as a whole.

According to the experts, rearing the entire male population is the consequent way to ensure comprehensive animal welfare and implementation suitable in practice. The first results on husbandry of young boars give grounds for optimism.

There was unanimity amongst the experts that the market should not be fragmented. Until an alternative procedure is finally ready for deployment in practice, the QS scheme continues to prescribe the use of painkillers when castrating piglets. QS piglet breeders have already been practising this intermediate step for 18 months now. A violation against this animal welfare requirement will represent an exclusion criterion as from 2011.

A current declaration and submissions on the Internet: www.q-s.de/en

DEMAND FOR BEEF CONTINUES TO RISE **EVER MORE GOODS WITH THE QS CERTIFICATION MARK IN THE RETAIL TRADE**

The trend recognisable in the past 2 years is clearly continuing in 2010: The demand for beef from private households in Germany rose again by 2.6 % from January to August 2010. This increasing demand is being met more and more by goods originating from the QS scheme. Almost 3,000 further beef farmers have joined the QS scheme within a year.

It is likewise pleasing that not only more QS beef is being sold, but also that it is more frequently recognisable as such because it bears the QS certification mark. In order to meet the increasing requirement for information from participants in the scheme (and those who want to join), QS has come up with informative media in the form of flyers and handouts. The beef flyer, in particular, explains to farmers how they can join the QS in an uncomplicated manner.

These flyers have already been called up over 20,000 times in the last few months. Those interested can request it from QS or download it from the Internet in PDF format:

www.q-s.de/en



HELP FOR CONVENIENCE PRODUCTS: **NEW WORK AID**

A new work aid provides information on how the QS certification mark can be deployed for products which do not consist of 100 per cent meat.

The work aid explains how convenience products should be marked. The components in a product which concern goods from QS certified origin must be clearly recognisable.

This regulation governs meat, meat products and preparations and manufactures with an additive of meat and meat products which are not found in the directive for meat and meat products in the German Food Code.



The QS certification mark can be used for the product. The made-up name (e.g. Chinese Meat Strips with Chop Suey) is not affected by QS labelling. The retail labelling is supplemented with the "(QS)" rider and the QS ingredients can be marked accordingly with an asterisk in the list of ingredients.

The new work aid is available on the Internet at: www.q-s.de/en

For example, the following applies to meat strips and vegetables:

SUSTAINABILITY **QS WORK GROUP AFTER THE KICK-OFF MEETING**



The sustainability work group met for the first time on September 28th, 2010 in Bonn. QS has brought together experts from all scheme participant stages – from animal feed through to food retailing – around a table to discuss a subject which affects the entire foodstuffs industry.

The wide range of questions surrounding sustainability became apparent as early as the kick-off meeting. The work group agreed that it was necessary and made sense for the entire industry to get to grips with the topic. Although some enterprises in the meat sector have already initiated their own sustainability strategies, there is not a common procedure agreed throughout the industry. A uniform understanding of what sustainability means has therefore been lacking to date.

This is precisely the question that the members of the work group are now tackling. They discuss which aspects of sustainability are important for enterprises participating in the QS scheme in the first place, and how such can be implemented.

The following procedure was agreed to provide a more solid foundation: A matrix is to be compiled containing all aspects relevant to sustainability along the complete chain of value creation. The members of the work group want to go into the next round with the requirements defined therein. Dr. Alexander Hinrichs, who coordinates the work group at QS, was pleased with the promising start: "All those involved have a prime interest in coming up with meaningful strategies here in the short term."

The next meeting takes place on December 9th, 2010.

SCHEME MANUAL **THE NOVELTIES AS FROM JANUARY 1ST, 2011**

The guidelines and check lists which come into force at the start of the new year were open to public discussion during October and November 2010.

The German version was able to be read on the Internet by all those with an interest up to the start of November and comments could be en-

tered directly online. Comments on the English are still being accepted up to the start of December. The feedback is intended to serve the continuous improvement of the scheme manual.

Overall, the scheme manual and the guidelines have been streamlined and made more easy to use with this revision. Very few additional requi-

rements have been added. All of the changes have been discussed in the advisory boards and resolved unanimously.

All comments were reviewed and taken into consideration, wherever feasible. The new guidelines will apply as from January 1st, 2011.

INTERVIEW ON LIVESTOCK TRANSPORTS: "ITS NOT EXACTLY ROCKET SCIENCE"

All those who transport QS animals require QS approval as from January 1st, 2011. Cattle traders, abattoirs and farmers who use external operators to transport their animals can then deploy QS approved animal transporters from that date. QS thereby closes a loophole in the supply chain. QS has offered certification since the start of 2009. Although certification was voluntary during this two-year preparatory phase, it will become obligatory as from 2011. The regulation applies not only to animal transporters, but also to abattoirs with their own vehicle fleets. Patrick Steinke, managing director of Deutsche Vieh- und Fleischerhandelsbund e. V. in Bonn, talks about the new regulations in an interview.

Mr Steinke, how have the new stipulations been received in the trade?

We've been involved right from the start in the work group which compiled the QS guideline on animal transport, and are therefore completely behind its inclusion in the QS scheme. Livestock transporters are obviously important links in the supply chain. After all, the stipulations that have been made are not exactly rocket science. They are legal principles implemented for practice. They are contained in the Livestock Transport Ordinance (EC) No. 1/2005 and naturally also include the stipulations in the German Livestock Transport Ordinance. So there are no surprises



Patrick Steinke, managing director of Deutsche Vieh- und Fleischerhandelsbund e. V. in Bonn

as such, the guideline is based on laws applicable to everyone.

Will the trade be ready at the implementation date of January 1st, 2011?

As far as we know, so many animal transporters have already been embraced that there should be no bottlenecks whatsoever for participants in the QS scheme. Over 840 operators have already been approved and almost 300 further enterprises have registered for the audit in the coming weeks. We assume that significantly

more than 1,000 firms will have obtained their transport approval for the QS scheme by the end of the year.

So everything is hunky-dory as far as livestock transport is concerned?

Not quite. Transporters who have still done nothing to obtain approval need to get a move on, so that they can continue to deliver animals in the QS scheme after the cut-off date. Given the growing importance of QS meat for the industry, those who fail to take action in good time may find themselves in real trouble. That is why we are still offering training courses, and have been doing so since 2009, during our association conferences and meetings of members.

No extra audit for QS farmers

QS farmers who transport their own animals do not need to pass a special or early audit for livestock transports. The new regulations naturally also apply to them at the cut-off date. Compliance with the animal transport requirements will nevertheless first be verified at the next regular audit.

QS AT THE INTERMEAT FAIR A SUCCESSFUL PRESENCE



The Intermeat fair opened its doors this year in mid-September in Düsseldorf. The leading exhibition for the meat trade this time went under the motto of „Trusted Food: consumer trust raises turnover“.

QS exploited this platform to exchange views on its own stand. International quality assurance in the meat sector was a major talking point, as was networking with international standards. Marketing activities concerning the QS certification mark were a further topic. The packaging of

meat and meat products with the QS certification mark provided by scheme participants were a further magnet for the public.

Two cabinets on the QS stand impressively demonstrated how many meat and meat products nowadays bear the QS certification mark



Quality Assurance. From farm to the shop.

AUDITOR TRAINING **SUCCESSFUL IN 2010**



603 auditors attended 34 QS full-day training courses from January to September 2010. Participation is obligatory for all auditors. A

test held at the end of each day of training verifies that the content has been taken aboard by the auditors.

This time, around 12 per cent of the participants failed this test. 351 auditors from the meat and meat products supply chain took part in the training courses held this year.

QS experts agreed the content matter together with guest lecturers. These lecturers trained the auditors in matters such as combating pests in feed production or in biosafety for poultry. Microbiology was tackled by auditors in slaughtering/

deboning and processing, whilst the food retail training courses were concerned with product care and marketing standards.

A dedicated training course for coordinated audits was launched for the first time in 2010, for which 48 auditors are now approved. The planning of training dates for 2011 is currently in full swing. Specially tailored courses are to be offered in English next year for all those auditors who are not native speakers of German.

More on the dates at: www.q-s.de/en

SCHEME PARTICIPANTS AND MARKETS **CURRENT FIGURES**

In the meantime, the QS scheme boasts over 108,000 scheme participants in the meat and meat products supply chain. Of these, almost 9,600 participants come from outside Germany. In addition 7,950 Danish and 2,113 Belgian firms deliver on the basis of system recognition. Thus altogether about 20,000 scheme participants stem from outside of Germany. Further more than 27,000 companies are entitled to deliver cows for slaughter via QM milk auditing.

The number of livestock transporters approved by QS is increasing rapidly at present: Whilst there were 797 approved operators at the cut-off date for the monthly figures, this number had risen to 840 enterprises as we went to print now. And more are added every day. Several hundreds are undergoing the recognition process, by January 1st, 2011 it will be over 1,000 animal transport businesses that have been approved. Together with the fruit, vegetables, potatoes supply chain, the QS scheme currently has 129,137 participants.

Stage	Total 108,233	Of which outside Germany 9,558
Animal feed	3,085	409
- Feed material	1,206	107
- Compound feed	707	263
- Mobile milling/mixing equipment	540	7
- Retail, transport, storage	632	32
Agriculture	80,141	8,775
- Cattle farming ¹	30,657	7
- Pig farming ²	45,809	7,380
- Poultry farming	3,675	1,388
Livestock transport	797	4
Slaughtering/deboning	434	42
Processing	277	12
Foodstuffs retailing³	23,499	316

¹ Additionally entitled to deliver cows for slaughter: 27,320 firms via QM milk auditing

² Additionally entitled to deliver on the basis of system recognition: 7,950 firms QSG (DK) and 2,113 Certus (B)

³ Including 140 meat wholesalers

++ **SHORT AND CURRENT** ++ **SHORT AND CURRENT** ++ **SHORT AND CURRENT** ++ **SHORT AND CURRENT** ++

QS sets an example

Gerd Billen, head of the Federal Association of Consumer Advice Centres (VZBV), called for stricter controls in the production of toys in an interview with the Tagesspiegel newspaper: he would like to see a control system for toys similar to that for the QS certification mark. Mr Billen believes that the three-stage concept of combined in-house inspections, neutral controls and the monitoring of inspections in the QS scheme is an example well worth copying.

No worries for MAP fresh meat

BMELV held specialist talks on October 29th, 2010 on the following topics: Meat packaged under a modified atmosphere with higher oxygen content (MAP), oxygen pressure treatment of fresh meat and the assessment of risks asso-

ciated with vacuum-packed beef contaminated with clostridium estertheticum. The following results were able to be established: No action is required as far as MAP is concerned. Implementation of the marking of fresh meat treated with oxygen pressure is to be examined in QS audits from January 2011. There are no indications of a health risk for humans from clostridium estertheticum at present.

QS communication and marketing

Following the departure of Dr. Torsten Staack, QS has reorganised its communication and marketing activities: Stefan Martin, previously responsible in the team for marketing and sales, now assumes overall responsibility. Heike Wegener recently joined QS. The trained journalist and PR officer has taken over the communication



and public relations work at QS.

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