

Delacon participates in EU research project focused on optimizing feed efficiency and reducing the ecological footprint of pigs and broilers

STEYREGG/AUSTRIA. The livestock sector, policy-makers and scientists more and more consider climate change and rising meat consumption as good reasons to take a closer look not only at the economic but also at the ecological sustainability in livestock production. Within the frame of the 'ECO-FCE' project, Delacon and 16 other industry partners, research organizations and universities are conducting research on optimizing feed efficiency and reducing the ecological footprint of monogastrics. The project has started in February 2013, takes 48 months and is funded by the European Commission with six million Euros. Initial results were discussed in February.

A better understanding of the interactions between animal genetics and other factors such as the attributes of feed help in developing strategies to improve feed conversion efficiency in pigs and broilers whilst also reducing their ecological footprint. This is the basis of the whole-systems approach of the ECO-FCE project. The consortium of the multidisciplinary project comprises 17 industry partners, research organizations and universities with specialist expertise in the areas of monogastric nutrition, genetics, meta-genomics and statistical modeling, product quality, animal production and animal health and welfare.

Delacon, the global pioneer and leader phytogenic feed additives with headquarters in Austria, is one of the five industry partners. "The ECO-FCE project has similar objectives as Delacon: better feed utilization, improved animal health and increased profitability coupled with food safety and emission reduction", says Delacon's Head of Research & Development Dr. Karola Wendler and continues: "The ECO-FCE project allows us to investigate relationships between animal genetics, the housing systems, the attributes of feed and feed additives as well as the realization of extensive experiments and the discussion of the results within a very dedicated high-quality consortium. This is a great chance for us."

Emission measurement on high-tech level

Within the frame of the project, Delacon examines the efficiency of phytogenic (100% plant-derived) feed additives in optimizing feed efficiency and reducing harmful environmental emissions such as ammonia. In several experiments with pigs and broilers various botanical raw materials are tested. The best strategies of the entire project, e.g. for feed formulation and feed additives are then combined, and in further experiments, feed efficiency as well as emissions are reevaluated. The emission measurement with many repetitions are done at the emission sections at Delacon's research farm in the Czech Republic (Performing Nature Research Center), which is, in this regard, unique in Europe.

Potential for more efficient and ecologically-friendly pig and poultry production

In February, the project partners have discussed promising initial results at the University of Veterinary Medicine in Vienna, which is the Austrian research partner of the ECO-FCE project. One of the last parts of the project will be to develop several tools for the pig and poultry industries including the ECO-FCE 'hub' with tailored information, an ecological calculator and genomic models.

As a result of this project, Delacon hopes for new knowledge about phytogetic substances, which are then used for developing new products. In addition, the knowledge and know-how garnered in this project will be included in Delacon's Feed Tech Service for customers.



Improving feed conversion efficiency and reducing ecological footprint of monogastrics of pigs and broilers are the key objectives of the ECO-FCE project. Delacon is one of the five industry partners.

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About Delacon

Founded and grown as an Austrian family business, Delacon has been the pioneer and global leader in phytogetic feed additives for more than 27 years. The company researches, develops and produces purely natural feed additives composed of herbs, spices and essential oils for ruminants, swine and poultry and coined the term 'phyto-genics'.

With 120 employees at 16 locations Delacon is consistently working on further expansion of its global leadership. In total Delacon's products are exported to more than 50 countries. For years, the company realizes double-digit growth of revenues; ten percent of the annual revenues are invested in research and development.

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For more information on the ECO-FCE project, visit: www.eco-fce.eu