



## **The vision of phytogenics became a reality through Delacon**

**Steyregg, Austria, October 2018 – This year, Delacon celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. After 30 years, it is an excellent opportunity to look at the story of how and why it all started for Delacon. For that, Delacon’s founder Helmut Dedl and his son and current CEO Markus Dedl are sharing their story in this interview.**

### **What was the idea in the beginning and how did it start with Delacon?**

**Helmut Dedl:** It all started around 1984 when I worked at an agrochemical company in the innovation department. We had all kinds of exciting projects, and one of them was using plant extracts for animals. We saw some interesting measurable effects in trials, and there were discussions about whether these plant extracts could replace medications. After this discovery, we wanted to go deeper in research. We were absolutely sure there was so much potential for the future. It became necessary to invest more in research, but the management didn’t want to deal with herbs and spices as this was a chemical company. My former colleague and I deeply believed in this vision, so we bought the formulations and continued the work in our own company. This was the birth of Delacon in 1988.

### **Is the vision from 1988 still valid today?**

**Markus Dedl:** Absolutely! I truly believe this. It is essential to continue to follow the vision to pioneer a natural way to keep animals healthy and performing because it has carried us to where we are today. The vision has become a reality, but we are still not done working to replace antibiotic growth promoters in animal nutrition in the whole world.

### **How was the feed market 30 years ago?**

**Helmut Dedl:** The market was very different from now. It was very industrial, and the consumer wasn’t a topic at all. The feed industry used many additives including antibiotic growth promoters, even in Austria, but we were already on a good path to replace them.

### **Why did you choose such a high specialization?**

**Markus Dedl:** Going in the direction of phytogenic feed additives hadn’t been done before. The sheer fact that we are dealing with natural ingredients has its charm and a good feeling. Also, it is extra motivating because it has a positive impact in the world.

### **How did the market change over the last 30 years?**

**Helmut Dedl:** There were many changes, but one of the biggest is the emergence of the consumer as a significant stakeholder in the animal nutrition industry. Early on, there was limited interest by the consumer in animal nutrition. Today, we have consumers driving decisions for how animals are fed by their personal food choices. Additionally, there was a professionalization of the global animal industry with many innovations in different areas. One of the main innovations was the entry of genetics in the animal industry, which brought significant improvements in feed conversion.



### **What makes Delacon a pioneer?**

**Markus Dedl:** We are boldly going toward goals we believe in, even if it is very challenging at times. It is a part of our culture and history to do the right thing. This is what pioneers do. For instance, my father left a well-established job in the chemical industry in his 50s to found a new company in a market that didn't yet exist to follow his vision.

### **What differentiates Delacon from other phytogetic manufacturers?**

**Markus Dedl:** What differentiates us is that we go deeper into the phytogetic universe than anybody else in terms of variety of plant species and scientific depth. We are not limiting ourselves to one group of ingredients, like essential oils. We are looking at the whole plant universe and selecting the best parts of its powerful offerings for our products.

### **When did phytogetics become mainstream in the feed industry?**

**Helmut Dedl:** There isn't an exact date, but it happened continuously over the last 15 years. First, it started in Europe and after that Asia and the United States followed.

### **How is Delacon organizing growth?**

**Markus Dedl:** Growth is, of course, a double-edged sword. In the last 10 to 15 years, we have had annual growth of 20 percent on average. We know 20 percent is a figure where we can grow comfortably without compromising our integrity. When you grow much faster than that, we think it gets difficult to maintain the culture and level of service for our customers.

### **What are the perspectives for Delacon in the next five to 10 years?**

**Markus Dedl:** We have a lot of animals to feed with our phytogetic ingredients, and we want to help producers do this in a sustainable way. Sustainability not only means our products are environmentally friendly, but we also want to be a stable company and partner for our customers and our people. It has always been Delacon's vision to lead this market. We have invested 30 years in creating this market and this company, so we are humbled by the opportunity to lead phytogetics into the future.



**Markus Dedl**, son of Delacon's founder Helmut Dedl, has taken over as CEO of the company and all its subsidiaries in 2010. Before that, he served as Manager Finance & Operations. Under his leadership, the company records annual growth of over 20 percent and has become the global leader in the growing market segment of phytogenic feed additives.

**Helmut Dedl** founded Delacon in 1988 and coined the term 'phytogenic feed additives'. His vision to replace antibiotic growth promoters in animal nutrition carried Delacon to where it stands today. In 2010 he handed over the management to his son, Markus Dedl, and after 30 years at Delacon he retired in 2017.

### **Delacon – performing nature**

Delacon coined the term "phytogenic feed additives," and has been a pioneer and global market leader in this category for three decades. The steadily growing team researches, develops and manufactures plant-derived products composed of herbs, spices, other plants and their extracts for poultry, pigs, ruminants and aquaculture. The demand for phytogenic feed additives continues to grow and hence, Delacon was awarded as sales growth champion 2018 for its double-digit growth rates. It leads the ranking in its business sector in Austria and is one of 150 companies that gained growth rates above average.

[www.delacon.com](http://www.delacon.com) | [office@delacon.com](mailto:office@delacon.com) | +43 732 640 531 - 0