



Boars heading for 2018

Boars 2018: How to reach our goal?

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Chairman Committee Boars 2018



Annechien ten Have-Mellema

Pig and arable farming in north of the Netherlands

- Produce for UK-market since 1998:
 - sows in group on straw,
 - non castration.
- Participate in Better Life scheme since 2010.
- Manure fermentation to produce energy.
- Growing lupine to replace soy beans.
- Plans to built a two stars free range pig stable.

Active in Dutch Farmers Union LTO Nederland

- Chairman of the pig branch 2004 – 2012
- Chairman Dutch project to end castration since 2008





The challenge: ending castration

About 100 million male pigs annually castrated in Europe

- Taken for granted: prevents boar taint.

But:

- Intervention in the animal:
 - not welfare friendly, risk of infection.
- Annoying and labour intensive for pig farmers.
- Boars have a better feed conversion. Stopping would save farmer costs and means 700.000 ha less agricultural land required.



European Declaration on castration 2010, striving for:

- castration with pain relief per 1-1-2012,
- ending castration by 1-1-2018.



History (1)

- The '90-s
Danish detection methods not accepted in Germany.
 - Around the year 2000
increasing sense of urgency in EU countries
 - European NGOs set requirements for pork (meat in general)
production chains
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History (2) The Netherlands

- Pressure from NGOs increases (sustainability, animal welfare)
- Steering committee boars2018 founded in 2007
(pig farmers, slaughterhouses, NGOs, government)
- Declaration of Noordwijk
- A 5-year research program (up until 2013)

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History (3) EU

- Brussels' Declaration 2010
 - Chain parties record their ambition to stop castration, EU-wide in 2018
 - Signed by many EU sector parties
 - Market acceptance is leading; no regulation
 - European Platform
 - Cooperation between EU researchers; EU research tenders
 - European expert group with 4 working groups
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Experiences in The Netherlands

- Strong sense of urgency
 - Close cooperation business, science, ngo and government
 - Clear ambitions:
 1. animal welfare
 2. international market acceptance
 - One coordinated five year research program (2008-2013)
 - Learning attitude based on sharing facts and figures
 - February 2014: approximately 65% entire male pigs (5% in 2009)
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Dutch domestic market (1)

- **Barriers**

- Difficult to change 50 year old habits
- Traditional attitudes in supply chain
- Lack of knowledge and trust
- New on line detection system
- Genetic selection effective, but long term solution
- Strong hesitations in small outlets, butcher shops and processing industry

- **Opportunities and benefits**

- Improving animal welfare -- > consumer appreciation
 - Profitable for pig farmers
 - Contribution to environment - sustainable
 - Improving image supply chain
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Dutch domestic market (2)

- **Market response**

- Dutch retail association:

- “our members have not received any remarks or complaints”*

- Development Dutch pork per capita consumption 2009-2013

- relatively good

- Dutch retail agreement as from 1.1.2014
only pork from entire pigs in Dutch supermarkets



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Validation Human Nose system

- Over 1 ½ million data
 - Trained assessors most accurate method
 - Selection and training protocol assessors
 - Daily and weekly controls of each assessor performance
 - Testing periods and duration optimized (max. 30 minutes; min. 15 minutes rest)
 - No back fall of assessors after discovery boar taint
 - No complaints during 5 years of consumer research
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Possibilities for exporting countries

- Both Denmark and Netherlands high level of expertise
 - Sharing facts and figures creates trust
 - High level market intelligence available
 - Reliable detection method available
 - Increased worldwide focus on sustainability and animal welfare
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Challenges EU

- Crucial:
 - Market acceptance (opportunities & challenges)
 - International cooperation
 - Sharing information
 - Shared vision on the perspective of detection
 - Important role for DG SANTE Expert Group
 - NGO's driving forces
 - Sharing research results with retail and out-of-home
 - Sharing knowledge on do's and don'ts boar management
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Success factors

- **Cooperation inside/outside the production chains in EU countries**
(pig farmers, slaughterhouses, industry/retail, researchers, feed manufacturers, vets, social organisations, etc.)
- **European control of research**
- **Exchange of information, knowledge and experience within the EU**

Cooperation in the EU on market acceptance

- **The collective will to succeed**
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Concluding comments (1)



- Boars not a problem but a design challenge
- Barriers, but also benefits and solutions
- Consumer reactions: look and find the differences
- The proof of the pudding is in the eating
- Do's and don'ts boar management available



Concluding comments (2)

- Lower food print boars (5-8%)
 - Consumer is golden standard: quality guarantees
 - Detection methods available
 - Genetic measures effective and in use
 - Exporting countries: great opportunities (but also some risks)
 - Worldwide focus on sustainability/animal welfare increasing
 - Brussels declaration: 2018 nearby
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The European approach

- Cooperation through international contacts
Eurogroup for Animals, farmers' organisations, international conferences, EU expert group, etc.
- Research cooperation
Information exchange, combined research projects, research reviews
- An open, transparent approach
concerning process, results and progress





The role of the EU

Support and help and financial support

- Communication: facts and figures
 - Collect figures about good practices
 - Detection methods validated – important for trust!
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Thank you for your attention!

For more information
www.boars2018.com
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