



In Danish pork production, animal welfare has long been high on the agenda.

Danish Agriculture & Food Council

Looking forward

The certification of Danish pork production plants according to the Danish product standard has not been affected by the Corona pandemic. The country continues to maintain its many animal welfare-related activities.

Especially during the Corona crisis, the highest level of product quality and food safety is a top priority in the Danish pork sector, says Asger Kjær Nielsen.

He is a Quality Manager for the Danish Product Standard and Danish Transport Standard at the SEGES Pork Research Center in the Danish Association of the Agriculture and Food industry. "I focus on disease control as well as animal welfare, food safety and traceability, which are summarized in the Danish product standard," Nielsen said, stressing that cur-

rent certification of Danish pork production plants according to the Danish product standard has not been affected by the pandemic to date. "We have set up an emergency plan in case tests can no longer be carried out on the premises.

This includes, among other things, administrative e-audits via telephone or Skype followed by on-site inspections for the remaining tests after the end of visiting restrictions," said the quality manager. Up to now, however, all audits have been carried out as planned.

Cleanliness is paramount

According to the Danish transport standard, all trucks that transport the approximately 15 million pigs annually to other European countries must be inspected, cleaned and disinfected. In the village of Padborg, near the Danish-German border, five SEGES employees check and monitor the cleaning of all transport vehicles. There, trucks that meet the cleaning standards required by the European Union are washed and disinfected again. Vehicles that have not been



Asger Kjær Nielsen, Quality Manager at the SEGES Pork Research Center in the Danish Association of Food and Agriculture, focuses on disease control, animal welfare, food safety and traceability.

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thoroughly washed are returned for recleaning and only then allowed to travel to their destination in Denmark after cleaning and disinfection. "COVID-19 has not changed this approach, except for the fact that the vans are now being checked outside the wash halls and the recommended distance to the drivers must be observed," reports Asger Kjær Nielsen.

Focus on animal welfare

In Danish pork production, animal welfare has long been high on the agenda. The following objectives are particularly important: free-range enclosure of suckling sows, no tail-docking or castration and the increase of the piglet survival rate. For years now, the Kingdom of Denmark has been pushing for the expansion of the free-range enclosure of sows. Free-range enclosure of pregnant sows and breeding animals is already prevalent. However, the industry also wants to advance free-range enclosure in farrowing stables and is thus developing innovative enclosure systems for this purpose.

Various scientific institutions in Denmark have been researching alternatives to tail-docking for some time. As part of the Danish product standard, all cases of tail biting have been recorded since January 1, 2019.

Since that date, male piglets in Denmark may only be castrated after prior local anesthesia. Special courses for pork producers and their staff have thus been developed. Alternatives to castration, such as boar fattening and immunocastration, have been researched in Denmark for many years. The aim is to find an optimal solution for the prevention of boar odor and animal welfare.

More pork for China

Keyword piglet. Last year, the Danish pork sector increased its exports of piglets by 3.4 percent to just under 15 million animals. In 2019, 16.6 million pigs were slaughtered – a drop of eight percent over the previous year. Pork and live animal exports are also declining, according to the Danish Association of the Agriculture & Food industry. The industry exported 1.8 million tons of pork, by-products, processed products and live pigs last year. Compared with 2018, this is a minus of around eight percent.

Germany remains the most important market for the Danish pork sector. The trading partners ordered 456,000 tons of goods, mainly whole animals, pork halves, sections and live animals. Poland and the United Kingdom rank second and third in the export statistics with a volume of

265,000 and 187,000 t respectively. Exports to the European Union total almost 1.2 million tons.

The Danish pork sector is showing positive developments in third-country business, mainly due to demand in China. Due to the outbreak of African swine fever (ASF) in China, around 40 percent of the total pork

Info

More information about the Danish pork sector in Denmark is available on the Danish Agriculture & Food Council website, www.agricultureandfood.co.uk.

population had to be killed there, according to official data – more than 200 million animals. To ensure the supply of pork, the country has since ordered more raw materials from abroad. Danish companies delivered more than 378,000 tons of pork to China in 2019 – an increase of over 70 percent compared to the previous year. Whole animals and pork halves as well as by-products were in particular demand in China. The Danish pork sector is also experiencing strong development in its business with Australia. Last year, the industry shipped almost 51,000 tons of goods Down Under – an increase of almost 35 percent. www.fachinfo-schwein.de



Animal transport vehicles are washed and disinfected again near the Danish-German border.

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