

Highlights from the Workshop on the Feed Value Chain

Forty six people attended the EPSO workshop on the 'Feed value chain' held on 26-27 June 2007 in Copenhagen (DK). The gathering brought together key scientists and agri-industry representatives in a successful interaction to exchange ideas on the current challenges faced by the feed-livestock value chain.

Co-organised by Claus H. Andersen (Plant Biotech Denmark), Odd Arne Rognli (Norwegian University of Life Sciences) and Vincent Pétiard (Nestlé), the workshop provided new insights into research objectives from the view of plant science and animal nutrition. The feed value chain encompasses plant breeding, feed crop production, feed formulation, as well as meat and dairy products.

The workshop programme offered high-quality presentations covering the different areas of the feed value chain, including issues of price, quality, environmental sustainability and animal welfare. In particular, new insight arose from the combination of presentations covering research objectives from the view of plant science and animal nutrition, and with angles from participants from both the public and private sectors. Taken together, a picture was created demonstrating the magnitude and complexity of the challenges facing the feed value chain.

One major conclusion is the need to integrate research across the value chain to harvest synergy and complement competences. A major challenge in the future will be to implement successfully chain management to achieve sustainable solutions.

A central part of the workshop was devoted to a discussion on defining prioritised research objectives with the potential to integrate different areas/disciplines across the feed-livestock value chain.

"This is a golden chance to put together a consortium to address all the issues along the feed value chain," said Julian Wiseman from the University of Nottingham, UK.

Conclusions from the discussion include the headings:

- Improvement of quality - concentration and composition of nutrients,
- Improvement of feed utilisation/efficiency by the characterisation of the non well digested -parts of the plant and technologies for improvements,
- Reduction of toxins and other harmful components,
- Yield stability and sustainability.

A working group to prepare a draft white paper and formulate the prioritised research objectives was formed. The white paper is expected by end of September 2007 and a final version by the end of October 2007.