



Einbeck, March 21, 2024

Berlin, Schloss Bellevue: KWS to present feeding project at the Week of the Environment

The Week of the Environment, sponsored by the German Federal Environmental Foundation (DBU), is held every four years. This year, KWS and other partners (Foundation of the University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover, Brand Qualitätsfleisch)¹ were selected to present their joint marketing and feeding project. The expert jury was impressed by how the regional marketing of pork, combined with a low-emission feeding concept with a high proportion of hybrid rye, is helping make food production more sustainable.

KWS and its partners will present this project on June 4 and 5, 2024, at the invitation of Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and the DBU, in the Schloss Bellevue park. They will be joined by other exhibitors from business and technology, research and science, and civil society, all presenting their innovative solutions for shaping change responsibly. "We are delighted about the award for an agricultural topic from the area of animal feed and livestock farming and its contribution to more sustainable agriculture," says Jürgen Leitzke, Head of the Cereals Business Unit at KWS. In the meantime, numerous scientific studies, including the 6-R concept² funded by the German Federal Ministry of Food and Agriculture (BMEL) and supported by KWS as an industrial partner, have proven the positive contribution that pig feed with a higher proportion of hybrid rye can make to both animal welfare and sustainable arable farming. Based on that, KWS and the University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover jointly developed an innovative feeding concept for pigs.

KWS applied for an award at the Week of the Environment with the topic "Die Heide-Strohschweine der Firma Brand – ein Beitrag für nachhaltige Tierhaltung und Lebensmittel" (*The Heide straw pigs from the Brand company – a contribution to sustainable livestock farming and food*). It specifically deals with the regional marketing of pork produced with reduced emissions in Lower Saxony. "Sustainable agriculture must offer real added value for farmers, and also be feasible. That is exactly our goal, to offer farmers solutions for more sustainable management of their farms that also make a measurable contribution to greater animal welfare," says Dr. Peter Hofmann, Executive Board member at KWS and also responsible for the Cereals Division. "The award shows that our commitment is effective and that we are also meeting society's demand for livestock farming that promotes animal welfare and health, and the sustainable production of feed and food."

KWS also expects to receive certification this year for its sustainable, low-emission feeding concept. If you look at the areas of feed cultivation, livestock farming and slaughter, around 60 percent of CO₂ emissions result from pork from feeding. It has been proven scientifically that feeding pigs a rye-rich diet can reduce CO₂ emissions by around 20 to 30 percent up until slaughter. This is due to the resource-efficient agricultural properties of the crop.

Hybrid rye – potential for greater sustainability

The fact that rye – and oilseed rape as a source of protein – are regional products, and that farmers can use them to grow their own feedstuff significantly contributes to reducing emissions in animal feed. Another factor that contributes to conserving resources is that hybrid rye needs less water than other types of cereal, and requires significantly less fertilizer and pesticide since it generally exhibits good plant health. A sustainability study concludes that hybrid rye produces about 70 kg of CO₂ per ton of crop yield and hence about 20 percent less than, for example, wheat, which is otherwise used in pig feed. The 6-R concept and

accompanying practical studies also show the positive effects of rye-rich feeding on animal health: The salmonella contamination at fattening farms can be lowered by up to 30 percent, the pigs have improved gut health, and there is evidence that the fiber in rye leads to improved and calmer animal behavior.

The European Green Deal and the Farm-to-Fork strategy set clear environmental and climate protection targets for agriculture in Europe. Emission-reduced pig feeding makes an important contribution to safeguarding livestock farming in Germany and Europe, and to reducing the environmental footprint of food production. Supporting sustainable nutrition is part of the KWS 2030 Sustainability Ambition, in which the company has set ambitious, measurable targets for itself to deliver solutions for sustainable farming into the future.

¹: Other producers from Lower Saxony

²: 6-R concept: "Regionale Renaissance von Roggen und Raps zur Reduktion von Problemen in Pflanzenbau und Tierproduktion durch Reevaluation der Inhaltsstoffe und deren gezielte Nutzung zur Förderung des Umwelt-, Tier- und Verbraucherschutzes" (*Regional renaissance of rye and oilseed rape to reduce problems in crop and livestock production through the reevaluation of substances and their systematic use to support environmental, animal and consumer protection*). The 6-R concept was mainly developed by Prof. Josef Kamphues (University of Veterinary Medicine Hanover) and is now managed by the working group led by Prof. Christian Visscher, with Dr. Julia Gickel, Dr. Clara Hartung and Dr. Volker Wilke. Other participants: Rhenish Friedrich Wilhelm University of Bonn (Prof. Karl-Heinz Südekum), Free University of Berlin (Prof. Jürgen Zentek).

Über KWS

KWS is one of the world's leading plant breeding companies. Over 5,000 employees* in more than 70 countries generated net sales of around \$1,94 billion in the fiscal year 2022/2023. A company with a tradition of family ownership, KWS has operated independently for 165 years. It focuses on plant breeding and the production and sale of seed for corn, sugarbeet, cereals, vegetables, oilseed rape and sunflower. KWS uses leading-edge plant breeding methods to continuously improve yield for farmers and plants' resistance to diseases, pests and abiotic stress. To that end, the company invested more than \$320 million last fiscal year in research and development.

*excl. seasonal workforce

More information: www.kws.com. Follow us on X (Twitter) at https://twitter.com/KWS_Group.

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