

Danish root for pig savings

03 June 2005



Danish pig farms will have to double in size over the next eight years to survive, according to Danske Slagterier senior consultant Finn Udesen.

He expects production costs for a 300-sow herd producing 4500 slaughter pigs to rise from 9.5DKr/kg (88p) to 9.8DKr/kg (91p) by 2013.

The main reason for the increase is higher labour charges and building costs.

But by increasing the unit to 600 sows producing 9000 finishers that cost falls to 9.3DKr/kg (86p).

Mr Udesen believes the number of pig farmers in Denmark will fall from about 11,100 in 2003 to just 5500 in 2013.

Danish Crown has already taken a step towards cutting its costs with the opening of a £185m automated slaughterhouse, which has allowed the company to shed 300 jobs.

Producers are increasingly sending weaners to Germany and Poland for finishing, where labour costs and welfare standards are lower.

This trend has seen Danish pig production fall for the first time in five years, down 1m animals to 22m, while live exports increased by the same margin to 3.3m.