

JSR Genetics Latest News



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Food safety key issue facing global pork production

UK - Food safety and the eating quality of pork will be the big issues facing the global pig industries in the future, predicts Brian Edwards, director of international business for JSR Genetics.

Although cost of production remains important to profitability, if this were the sole determinant of where pigs were produced then there would be a major shift, with exports from low-cost areas such as Brazil, Canada and the USA, to markets with high domestic production costs, such as Japan, Korea and parts of northern Europe.

He said: "Food safety in recent years has become a major consideration. BSE, dioxin, drug and hormone contamination have shifted the purchases from one country to another and, in the worst cases, from one continent to another. Notifiable diseases pale into insignificance compared with the permanent trade restrictions imposed by many Asian and South American countries."

The eating quality of pork remains important and may ultimately determine the continued dominance of pork in the global meat market, explained Mr Edwards.

"The requirement for fresh 'wet' pork in many markets, particularly Asia, means that the opportunities for frozen pork are reduced, although chilled pork is becoming more popular. But time and distance constraints mean that temperature-controlled transport is needed and this increases cost significantly."

The effect of environmental legislation could also become a major obstacle to increasing production in many parts of the world, particularly where traditional family farms were being replaced by large corporate enterprises where scale and density of pigs could have a significant impact on the surrounding area.

However, Mr Edwards anticipated a healthy growth for pigmeat. While it is predicted that global demand for meat as a whole will rise from 190 million tonnes in 2003 to 225 million tonnes by 2007, in line with population growth, it is expected that the improving economic situation in Asia - where pork is already the Number One meat - will rise above the trends experienced by other meats, including poultry.

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