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THE FEED CHAIN IN ACTION 5

Bringing Regional Sustainability Challenges into the Picture

On 17 March 2016, FEFAC and IZBA (the Polish Feed & Grain Chamber) organised a workshop on sustainability in Warsaw. With approximately 25 participants we had a good discussion on what sustainability means for the feed industry and explored the priorities and challenges of Central and Eastern Europe for the development of sustainable feed and livestock production systems.

As chairperson of the FEFAC Sustainability Committee, I presented the FEFAC vision on Sustainability. I highlighted the potential for a responsible and resource-efficient feed industry to improve the sustainability of EU livestock farming by being proactive and delivering credible and robust data to support continuous improvement. It became clear that the key FEFAC sustainability pillars “environmental footprinting” and “responsible sourcing” may be high on the agenda in North-Western Europe, in countries like Poland the focus currently lies on other items.

It was interesting to see that a lot of work is being done to stimulate the development of alternative protein sources like sweet lupines, non-GMO soy and peas & beans. This is driven by the strong political disapproval of GMO feed materials in countries such as Poland and Hungary, which can even be found in legal provisions which aim to prohibit its use. The challenge to boost the development of alternative protein sources is very much present in other European regions too, although the motivation lies more in the desire to reduce the protein deficit and the subsequent reliance on imports. As well as in other countries, our colleagues in Poland and Hungary also see that replacing GMO soybean meal is a huge challenge for some sectors like broilers and laying hens, as no other protein source matches its qualities in the light of nutritional characteristics mainly linked to the amino-acid profile, palatability and availability.



From left to right: Zoltan Pulay, Angela Booth, Alexander Döring, Witold Obidzinski, Nicolas Martin

The FEFAC Sustainability Committee has already realised a substantial amount of work since it started its work in 2012, illustrated for example by the publication of the [Soy Sourcing Guidelines](#) and development of the [Feed PEF Pilot](#), which is designed to develop tools to measure and reduce the environmental footprint of feed and livestock production. Further work will need to be done, however, to allow for regional challenges and initiatives to become fully integrated into the Committee’s working programme.

Angela Booth is Chairperson of the FEFAC Sustainability Committee