

#WNF Cape Town digests animal nutrition issues

Innovative animal nutrition company Biomin hosted 800 delegates from 76 countries in Cape Town, South Africa from 3 to 5 October 2018. The theme of the scientific conference was S.C.O.P.E. or "Scientific Challenges and Opportunities in the Protein Economy".



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Over 40 expert speakers from industry and academia from across the globe explored the latest market trends and scientific developments relating to food-producing animals. In addition, delegates enjoyed opportunities for networking and experiencing the richness and diversity of local culture.

Accelerating towards the future

Market outlooks, consumption patterns and technology were discussed during the Thursday morning plenary session of the World Nutrition Forum.

As the world becomes increasingly multipolar, companies must become local citizens which means domestic invention, production and service rather than having a narrow footprint, according to Dr Erich Erber, Founder of Biomin. "You must keep the juice in the steak," he summarised.

Growth projections are optimistic. "You are definitely in an industry with big opportunity," Nan-Dirk Mulder, senior global animal protein analyst at Rabobank told delegates.

"Growing global incomes provide opportunities for entire animal protein industry, but the added production must be safe, affordable, sustainable and environmentally friendly," reminded Dr Vanbrabant, managing director of Biomin and CEO of Erber Group.

"Radical technological development must be used to close yield gaps in Africa and Southeast Asia," asserted Dr Peer Ede of Africa Enablers. "This will solve many food security problems without having to increase land use or changing consumer demand," he added.

The fast pace of technological advancement in the fields of next-generation gene sequencing (so-called –Omics

technologies), mycotoxin detection and mitigation, and the adoption of Farm 4.0 methods was cited as a trend that promises to reshape the protein economy.

"The future is for the innovators," stated Vanbrabant.

Responsible use of antibiotics

The move to reduce the application of antibiotics and the removal of antibiotic growth promoters (AGPs) from production systems, in particular, was seen as having an impact on the meat, egg and dairy markets, as livestock becomes more sustainable.

"Today we can raise high-performing, healthy farm animals and reserve antibiotics for treatment thanks to science," observed Franz Waxenecker, director of development and Innovation at Biomin.



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Mycotoxins

Our understanding of fungal metabolites and how they affect agriculture and the living organisms who consumer them has expanded significantly over the years. The mycotoxin session brought climate change, tools to predict mycotoxin occurrence patterns and novel mitigation strategies relying upon enzymatic biotransformation (the MYCOzyme concept) to the fore.

"Climate change means that we will likely need to change our mitigation strategies," explained Professor Naresh Magan of Cranfield University.

"Biomin is the global leader in mycotoxin risk management and we will continue to invest in new solutions for the industry in the future," announced Dr Gerd Schatmayr, global head of research at the Biomin Research Center.

Sustainability as the way forward

Vanbrabant explained how Biomin supports the industry in a press conference held shortly before the official opening of the forum. "Our goal has always been to support sustainable agriculture, now and in the future," explained Vanbrabant, noting that "our main contribution to sustainability is the application of our solutions in livestock."

Africa in focus

Earlier in the week, Biomin hosted the kick-off meeting of MycoSafe-South, a research project to tackle mycotoxin-related food safety issues in sub-Saharan Africa.

Africa holds considerable potential in terms of agriculture and economics, given that a quarter of the human global population will reside there by 2050. "We will see a protein revolution in Africa," stated Albert Van Rensburg, regional director Africa and managing director of Biomin South Africa.

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