

## DR. BERNHARD ECKEL, VICE PRESIDENT OF DR. ECKEL ANIMAL NUTRITION

“CHICKEN PROTEIN PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN WORLD NUTRITION. IT IS SAFE AND HEALTHY AND THE ONLY MEAT ACCEPTED BY ALL CREEDS AND DENOMINATIONS. AND CHICKENS HAVE AN OUTSTANDING FEED CONVERSION RATE. THAT MAKES CHICKEN A CHAMPION OF EFFICIENCY..”



### What are your best-known solutions/products/services?

As a pioneer in the industry, we have always been striving for the best solution. Being a pioneer implies going on unexplored paths. It can be challenging, but is very rewarding especially when you believe in what you are doing. At the beginning of our journey, more than 25 years ago, there was a lot of resistance to get rid of AGPs, as they were thought to be indispensable for animal performance. We believed in a livestock production without antibiotic growth promoters, and we proved that we were right. Nowadays, many countries have already banned or are planning to ban the use of antibiotics as growth promoters and as prophylaxis, due to issues related with drug resistance and ultimately safety for humans. Today's consumers want to know what is in the food they eat. They make informed decisions for themselves and their families. The pressure comes from the bottom up and not vice versa. So the challenge for modern livestock production is to meet the demands of consumers, society and politics for quality, sustainability and animal welfare, and still to be profitable with their business. We were one of the first companies to offer products

specifically designed for the improvement of animal welfare. This is what we provide and what we are best known for: Solutions that combine animal well-being with sustainability and profitability.

### Which industry sectors are your customers in, and which ones are growing fastest?

Our products serve a wide range of species, from poultry to ruminants to swine to fish and crustaceans. Around the globe, the demand for animal protein is still growing, which is best visible in the growth rates of the poultry and aquaculture industries.

### What are your most recent product innovations?

Only last month, we released our latest solution Anta®Catch, an innovative and highly effective new product. Intensive feeding with high protein and starch content often results in high endotoxin levels, which in turn impair animal welfare, health and performance. Anta®Catch has been designed from scratch to be a specific and especially effective solution for this problem. During the product development process, we aimed at finding raw materials with a high ability to adsorb endotoxins and to support the animals against the deleterious effects of endotoxin challenges.

**What are the major trends and developments affecting your category and your customers, and how are you responding?**

One recent development that is a challenge for all of us is certainly the Coronavirus pandemic. Apart from the threat for national and individual health, we have already seen production shut-downs, higher prices, shortages in raw materials and disrupted supply chains all over the globe. *vivo* and *in vitro*, against many microorganisms. Recently, the ability of Alquer mold Natural to reduce the concentration of *Campylobacter* in laying hens has been evaluated in comparison with certain organic acids and formaldehyde, compounds commonly used in poultry industry for the same purpose.

**And we have been cut off from each other:** For almost a year now, we have only been able to meet our customers digitally. Yet while we sorely miss them and will welcome the day when we finally will be able to visit them again, we are glad for the opportunities that technology gives us. So we can do our best to maintain production and deliveries as reliably as usual. And we keep in contact via video calls, online meetings and webinars to make sure that we care for our friends and partners as best as possible.

The other development has been there before coronavirus and still will be after the pandemic has finally been fought off. It is the need to secure the future of our industry. A lot has been talked, written and said about how to fortify businesses against the effects of the crisis. But what will really work out in the end is the solution that has been known and been right before, though not generally acknowledged yet, let alone accepted:

Sustainability. With almost 10 billion people to feed by 2050, we know that food production has to both increase and change. For this, we are faced with the enormous challenge of ensuring that we will have enough food for the world's population, and that the food is healthy, nutritious and produced in a manner that is sustainable for humans, animals and the environment. In the case of animal production, this means effective resource management, efficient feed production, no waste in terms of energy and raw materials, and also healthy animals. And at the end of the day, it has to be profitable, of course.

**What's your strategy for succeeding in the current climate?**

We look ahead—and go ahead—as we have always done. With our products, we can help improve performance by increasing animal growth, consequently producing more protein to combat hunger. We can add to a positive impact on food safety and security by reducing the use of medication. And we can support the reduction of our ecological footprint by improving efficiency. Feed additives help avoid feed and food losses. Though they can always only be one tool among many, feed additives play a vital part in securing the health and stability of our societies, nations and industries. There will always be new challenges and new crises. The best we can—and must—do is to strengthen people and businesses against their impacts. Agriculture is the key industry to finding solutions to secure the future for our world. And feed additives with their contribution to safe feed, sustainable production and healthy food are a substantial part of this solution.

**Can you tell us about any of recent customer contracts and how you helped the customer meet their challenges?**

Yes, one of our customers, an integration

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with laying hens, recently wanted to adapt its production so that antibiotics would no longer be used in the laying phase. At the same time, less dirty eggs should be produced. Such a conversion is a challenge that many producers shy away from. At the same time, however, it is very interesting from an economic as well as from a sustainability point of view. Not only do you save on antibiotics, but you can also market the eggs better. As we have stated before, one of our aims right from the start was to make animal production as antibiotic-free as possible. So we have over 25 years of experience in this field. With our phytogenic additive Anta®Phyt, we were able to help the customer achieve his goal and make the switch successfully. Anta®Phyt is the phytogenic way to achieve better digestibility, gut health and a higher dry matter content in the litter. This led to less dirty eggs and less antibiotics.

### **What's the latest news from your company?**

As mentioned above, we have just successfully concluded our latest major development by launching our new product Anta®Catch. Developing Anta®Catch took us more than two years and we were supported by several government funds, both local and from the European Union. These grants underline the fact that the public has a significant and justified interest in the development of an effective and reliable solution against endotoxins. Feeding solutions that enable farmers and producers worldwide to raise healthier, more resilient animals, cut down

medication, antibiotics and environmental pollution, and ultimately profit from it, are the right way into the future of animal production.

### **Can you tell us about any areas where you're currently making technical advances?**

Yes, we can reveal that there will be a technological innovation coming very soon: For one of our leading phytogenic products, we are working on a water-soluble solution which will be of particular value for poultry breeders and farmers. We shall be able to tell you more in a few weeks' time!

### **Could you please share your views on Poultry Industry for our magazine readers?**

As we have seen over the last years and even decades, the poultry industry is a key factor for reliable food supply. Almost half the worldwide feed production is for poultry. Chicken is the fastest growing production species in agriculture worldwide. Chicken protein plays a crucial role in world nutrition: it is safe and healthy and the only meat accepted by all creeds and denominations. And chickens have an outstanding feed conversion rate, converting 1.8 kg of feed into 1 kg of meat. That makes chicken a champion of efficiency. We are happy and proud to serve this great and important industry with our product solutions, e.g., our phytogenic feed additives which can decrease the feed conversion rate by up to 4%.