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The Netherlands

Livestock and Products

Illegal Growth Hormones found in Dutch Pigs

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Report Highlights: News of pigs contaminated with feed containing the banned growth hormone MPA worries the Dutch Livestock Sector. The Ministry of Agriculture temporarily closed 42 pig farms where the MPA was found in feed and suspects that more farms will be affected.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
The Hague [NL1], NL

On July 4, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture (MinAg) reported that the growth hormone medroxy progesterone acetate (MPA) had been found in pigs on 42 farms in the southern provinces of Limburg, Northern Brabant and Zeeland, and in the provinces of Utrecht, Gelderland and Drente in the middle and east of The Netherlands.

Although the 42 farms have temporarily been closed, there have been, so far, no product recalls or trade prohibitions. The MinAg and the Dutch Food Authority are trying to trace the movements of the syrup and pigs. Two contaminated farms reportedly exported 5,500 piglets to Belgium and another farm reportedly transported contaminated feed to a related pig farm Germany.

The Dutch Farmers Organization (LTO) believes that the farmers did not use the growth hormone intentionally and the problems are the fault of the feed compounders. Minister of Agriculture Brinkhorst sent a letter to Parliament saying that it is not a "coincidence" that the MPA is in the feed. The MinAg publically emphasized that the MPA levels found are not harmful to human health and the Dutch Retailers Organization has not yet detected changes in Dutch customer behavior as a result of the problems.

Signs of the use of MPA were first discovered in mid-May, when abnormalities in the reproductive behavior of pigs at a breeding farm were reported. On June 28, the MinAg announced that it found traces of MPA in samples of ten sows at the same farm.

The Dutch press reported that the origin of the MPA was from the feed compounding companies Porker Foods in Middelharnis (NL) and Zeeland Voeders in Zijtaart (NL), which used a glucose syrup produced by a recently bankrupt Belgian company, Bioland Liquid Sugar. A Dutch company, Rined Foods, in Venlo (NL) had stocked the sirup so it is believed that the syrup was probably sold to other feed compounders.

