

"One of the best decisions I ever

What if you have a multi-site pig production operation but your location is nowhere near a larger town? Ordering your feed further away is one option, but mixing and milling on-site is another. One that turns out to have some extra benefits, this Danish pig producer found out.

By Vincent ter Beek

In the heart of Jutland, Denmark, one doesn't always have the feeling of being situated in a densely populated country of Western Europe. The countryside sometimes seems to consist of nothing but slightly undulating landscapes, endless fields, plains and forests with only every now and then a village, a road or a farmhouse. Jutland may be the main chunk of Denmark

(69% of its surface) but only accounts for 46% of its 5.5 million inhabitants, since bigger cities like Copenhagen and Odense are located on other islands.

No wonder that the majority of pig operations can be found in Jutland, as is the finishing pig farm of Ny Endrupholm, owned by Martin Madsen, age 38. His multi-site finishing operation is spread out over twelve facilities in the near surroundings, producing altogether 90,000 slaughter pigs per year – equalling to about 25,000 fattening places. The main site of his facility is located near a village called Gørding, roughly 25 km east of Esbjerg.

Large part

Being situated in a somewhat remote part of the country requires quite some logistics to have 25,000 animals fed on a daily basis. By not buying ready feed from a feedmill, Madsen has always

bought in feedstuffs, for on-farm mixing and milling. Annually, he needs 5,000 tonnes of soybeans, 12,000 tonnes of wheat and 6,000 tonnes of barley.

Up until three years ago, these amounts were distributed to seven of the twelve production locations in order to create the desired blend prior to being transported onwards to all pig production houses. Apart from requiring mixing and milling manpower on every site, it made comparing performance results difficult. The consequence of decentralised mixing and milling is that pigs in every location receive feed of slightly different composition.

About two years ago, Madsen decided to try something new in an effort to push his pig production forward. "It was a strategic decision. We wanted to get exactly the same quality of feed in all locations," he explains. "In addition,

Silos

Mineral silos

Milling installation

Mixing installation

- The computer system is called MC99NT
- Up to five feed portions can be prepared at the same time through the installation.
- The machine now mixes 100 tonnes of pig feed per day - or 500 tonnes per week. This equals 26,000 tonnes per year.
- Ingredients like whey and minerals can be added in different amounts for different age groups.
- The cost price of mixing and grinding is €0.012 per kg or €1.200 per day.

ver made"



Martin Madsen: "We wanted to get exactly the same quality of feed in all locations."

we also wanted to simplify the process by creating one place to do all the grinding and blending. This way we can have all the relevant manpower in one place."

Therefore, on-site in Gørding, Madsen replaced his smaller installations by one large mix and mill installation. The machine is housed in a new barn, the machine having a total of ten silos with grain ingredients. Four of them contain wheat, four of them soy and two barley. Using computer guidance from a special cabin, the machine mixes the

available portions of feed into the desired quantities – and adds feed additives from another eight mineral silos.

Out comes a uniform dry feed mixture that meets the needs of all slaughter pigs, produced across five days per week. All in all, the output is stored in six mix feed silos, waiting to be transported away by lorries to the several sites.

Distributed

The mix and mill plant was distributed to Ny Endrupholm by Big Dutchman Scandinavia. The principle of on-farm mixing and milling is not new to the company, explains Hugo S. Holm, CEO, as on-farm mixing equipment has been provided by the company since around 1985. It's the size, however, which has been only present since the last two years. "The installation is mainly usable for larger production sites. In Germany, there are some, but also Denmark. You will find more of them in Eastern Europe, like in Latvia and Russia and that is where we hope

Ny Endrupholm farm details

- Madsen buys the growers when they are about 30 kg weight – and they are shipped to the abattoir when they have reached about 110 kg.
- One average, one half is sold in Denmark, the other half goes to Germany, where prices for slaughter pigs are currently higher than the domestic market.
- Altogether, the animals consume 100,000 kg of dry pig feed a day – mainly a mixture of barley, wheat, soy, and a series of additives, like minerals and fishmeal.
- The barley and wheat are partly produced on Madsen's own estate, as he grows barley, wheat and rapeseed on about 650 hectares. Soy is shipped in regularly from South America, and stored in a barn with a capacity of 5,000 tonnes.
- The farm is free of diseases like *App*, *Circovirus*, *PRRS*. Madsen has *SPF* pigs whenever available. Only *mycoplasma* are present.
- Mortality: 2%
- Average daily gain: 900 g/day

to sell more of these."

The installation is not very difficult to operate, claims Holm, the main 'rocket science' is located inside the computing system, not hidden in its use.

Madsen, in the meantime, is a happy man, calling the purchase 'one of the best decisions he has ever made' with regard to his pig production business. "This machine makes it a lot easier to build new stables," he says. "We simply don't need to build new feed installations anymore. This allows us to scale up faster." **PP**