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Objectives of the feed manufacturers conference from an industrial point of view

B.C. COOKE

CHIEF SCIENTIST OF DALGETY AGRICULTURE LTD

CHAIRMAN OF UKASTA SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

CHAIRMAN OF FEFAC SCIENTIFIC AND LEGISLATION COMMITTEE

SUMMARY - This paper discusses the objectives of the feed manufacturers conference from the point of view of scientists working in industry. It emphasizes that not only should science be presented but the opportunity should be given for other subjects which will have a dramatic effect on the industry in the future to be presented and discussed. It extols the virtues of an international approach by the industry and concludes that it is an opportunity to communicate with representatives of government and trade associations such as CESFAC and FEFAC.

Key words: Feed manufacturing, legislation, communication.

RESUME - "Objectifs de la conférence des fabricants d'aliments du point de vue industriel". Cet article analyse les objectifs de la conférence des fabricants d'aliments composés pour le bétail du point de vue des scientifiques travaillant dans cette industrie. Il est signalé qu'il ne s'agit pas uniquement de présenter cette science mais qu'il est également nécessaire de présenter et de débattre d'autres sujets qui auront un effet important à l'avenir pour cette industrie. Les vertus d'une approche internationale sont exaltées pour cette industrie et la conclusion est que cette conférence constitue une occasion de communiquer avec les représentants du gouvernement et d'associations de commerce telles que CESFAC et FEFAC.

Mots-clés : Fabrication d'aliments, législation, communication.

Introduction

The prime purpose of any conference is communication. The previous speaker Professor Armstrong has referred to Scientific Communication but it should be pointed out that any conference of this nature should also give attention to new and pending legislation and industrial changes that will affect animal production.

The programme should give the opportunity for trade associations such as ASFAC and CESFAC to confer with their members. Further it should ensure that the views of our international association FEFAC can be brought to the attention of individual companies who are, of course, the people who ultimately pay for such an association in Brussels.

It is certainly useful if the organisers can encourage personnel from agricultural ministries to attend. Attendance by personnel from advisory services who will be having a direct impact at the farm level is also advantageous. If one is to gain real advantage from communication time for social interchange is essential.

Professor Armstrong has referred to conferences organised by universities in both the USA and Europe, but there are similar conferences organised by Trade Organisations, an example being the Feed Forum arranged by the Irish Grain and Feed Association.

Legislation

The essential functions of papers on legislation should be to update the industries that are affected by the legislation. This requires attention to be given to the newly introduced legislation in the country where the conference is being held. A forward look should also be undertaken into proposed legislation both in the country of the conference, but as an EU member, also to consider proposed legislation under discussion in Brussels. Interpretation of the practical implications of this legislation

together with the effect this might have on the industry should be considered. Ideally the author of this paper should be closely involved in the trade association and FEFAC. In the case of the Nottingham Nutrition Conference the Chairman of UKASTA's Legislation Committee, who also represents UKASTA on FEFAC Committee A, is usually invited to present the paper on legislation. A clear objective should be to give information to and gain a feedback from the industry which can be taken into account in future negotiations with the National Government and with the Commission in Brussels. This is an ideal opportunity for both FEFAC and National Trade Associations to let its members know: (i) what is happening; (ii) what the association is doing to protect its members in the negotiations about forthcoming legislation.

Examples of recent legislative subjects which have been discussed at the Nottingham Nutrition Conference are given in Table 1 (Garnsworthy and Cole, 1994, 1995 and 1996).

Table 1. Recent UK and EU legislation discussed at the Nottingham Nutrition Conference

UK		EU	
Environment protection	(94)	Directive on feed materials	(94)(95)
Packaging waste	(94)	Additive directive - Amendments	(94)(95)
Waste management	(94)	Dietetic feeds directive	(94)(95)
Feeding stuffs			
- Non exclusive list	(95)	Tolerances	(94)
- Aflatoxin	(95)		
- Declaration of certain protein sources	(95)	Pathogens in feed	
- Inspectors powers to enter	(96)	- Zoonoses directive	(94)
- Enzymes and microorganisms	(95)(96)	- Balai directive	(94)
- Dietetic feeds	(96)	- Approvals directive	(95)
		- Specific feed materials directive	(95)
Pesticides		- Feed control directive	(95)(96)
- Maximum levels	(95)		
		Iodine in feeds	(96)
Fibre analysis	(95)		
		Nickel in fats	(96)
BSE regs	(95)(96)		
		MRL's for medicines	(96)
Codes of practice for <i>Salmonella</i> control			
- Workplace regulations	(96)	Pathogens in vegetable	
- Dust explosions	(96)	- Raw materials	(96)

It can be seen from the subjects covered in the last 3 years that a broad spectrum of legislation which is likely to affect the industry has been discussed. An example of a FEFAC Committee A agenda shown in Table 2 indicates the close relationship between these subjects discussed at Nottingham and the activities of FEFAC.

Similar examples could be taken from the programmes of the Irish Feed Forum and similar conferences organised in other EU member states. Whilst the attendees at a Feed Manufacturers Conference are in the main from a technical background due to their interest in the science presented at the conference these technicians working in industry must be aware of all the major pieces of legislation which will affect their work within a feed compound company.

Table 2. A typical agenda for a FEFAC Committee A Agenda

-
1. Minutes
 2. Information from the Secretariat
 3. EU Growth Promoter Conference - Report
 4. Texts under discussion at the commission DG6
 - 4.1. Feed legislation
 - 4.1.1. Sanitary aspects of feed materials and compounds
 - 4.1.2. Specific feed materials
 - 4.1.3. Biotechnical conference
 - 4.2. Additives directive
 - 4.2.1. Avoparcin/Ronidazol
 - 4.2.2. Maximum residue limits
 - 4.2.3. ANSA
 - 4.2.4. Tolerances
 - 4.2.5. Iodine
 - 4.2.6. Nickel
 5. Texts under discussion at Council of Ministers
 - 5.1. 5th Amendment Additives Directive
 6. Home mixing and EU legislation
 7. Horizontal directive on feeds
 8. Immunoglobulins/dietetic feeding stuffs
-

Factors affecting industry

There are obviously many changes that are occurring in the agriculture industry that will have a direct affect on the feed compound industry. A feed manufacturers conference is an opportunity when these matters can be discussed. A review of papers of the UK's Nottingham Nutrition Conference gives an example of some of the subjects which are of importance (Table 3) (Gainsworthy and Cole, 1994, 1995 and 1996).

Table 3. Subjects of industrial importance presented at Recent Nottingham Nutrition Conferences

1994	State of the Industry - Director General of UKASTA Use of RC Produced Oilseeds in Animal Feeds - Wageningen Update of BSE-MAFF Complementary Forages for Milk Production
1995	Feeding Dairy Cows of High Genetic Merit - Cornwell Effect of Manufacturing on Chemical, Physical and Nutritional Properties of Feed - Wageningen
1996	Benefits of Antibiotics in Animal Feed Public Health Problems Associated with the use of Antibiotics

International approach

Today's animal feed industry operates on an international basis. Whilst member companies may often sell their produce within an individual state they obtain raw materials from sources throughout the world. Thus a feed manufacturers conference should not be come insular but should encourage

wide opinions by inviting speakers from countries of the world. Again using the Nottingham conference as an example, in the last 3 years there have been 22 papers presented by UK authors, 4 by authors from the Netherlands, 2 from Canada, 1 from Germany and 1 from France. Your current organisers have clearly recognised in the First Southern European Feed Manufacturers Conference the necessity for this international approach with speakers from the European Community, France, Switzerland, Canada, UK, Portugal, Italy and the Netherlands as well as from Spain. This approach should be commended for the future.

Conclusion

As was said in the introduction, whilst the dissipation of scientific information must be a prime object of a feed manufacturers conference, there are many other subjects which need to be communicated to feed compounders. Changes in the industry, most particularly in relation to legislation, can have a dramatic impact upon a feed compounders operations and a conference of this type gives an ideal opportunity for detailed discussions with regard to the impact of these changes in industry. Providing the right balance of participants are persuaded to attend the opportunity exists for scientific debate between academics and industry scientists and also between industry and the civil servants who represent that industry in the formation of national legislation and in debates of EU legislation. It should further give the opportunity for the people involved in the industry to discuss with and influence the views of their representatives on both their national trade association and on FEFAC committees. The overriding objective should be to ensure that communication takes place to the benefit of the animal feed industry who are represented at the conference.

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