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Research focuses on nutritional strategies to reduce woody breast

The role of nutrition is now a focus in the search for tools and strategies to counter the impact of woody breast, a condition found primarily in fast growing, heavy broilers.

The exact cause of woody breast, a muscle abnormality affecting the texture and colour of chicken breast meat, is currently unknown – although some researchers point to selection for increased growth rates and meat yield.

The implication of this phenomenon, however, is significant throughout the entire chain of poultry production, from the producer down to the consumer, according to Dr Tara York, AB Vista Technical Manager for the US and Canada.

“We are presented with a situation where consumer complaints have increased based on the texture of the meat – and that results in financial impacts across the chain, back as far as the producer.

“In a market where demand for white breast meat is high, as it is in the US, being able to maintain the increase in growth rate and breast meat yield without negatively impacting muscle tissue development is important. Research is turning to nutrition to see what role it can play in helping reduce woody breast, whilst maintaining efficient and healthy growth – for the bird and the business.”

Dr York says the most recent unpublished studies suggest that dietary manipulations could help reduce the severity of woody breast, through improving the bird's ability to handle environmental and metabolic stress.

An analysis of this research will be presented at the upcoming International Phytate Summit (IPS3), convened by the University of Illinois, the Centre of Excellence for Poultry Science at the University of Arkansas, and AB Vista.

With a theme of *The Value Chain of Phytate Destruction*, the summit, to be held in the US this November, will bring together a group of experts to focus on strategies for formulating with minerals and amino acids in the presence of phytate and phytase – and includes discussions on woody breast.

Dr York says the academic conference, and subsequent regional follow-up events, are aimed at understanding how nutrition can help the industry to overcome current challenges such as woody breast.

“As an industry the more we expect from the broiler, the more we need to invest to ensure we accomplish our goal in an effective manner.”

To find out more about IPS3, please visit:

<https://www.abvista.com/Innovation/International/IPS3.aspx>

Please note: IPS3 is a closed academic event. Please contact your local AB Vista representative for more information on IPS3.

For more information, contact AB Vista on +44(0)1672 517 650 or info@abvista.com.

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Notes to editor:

AB Vista is an animal nutrition technology company offering pioneering products and technical services to the global animal feed industry. Since its establishment in 2004, AB Vista has grown to be a top-three player in feed enzymes and is also one of the largest suppliers of natural betaine to the global animal nutrition industry. The company invests heavily in research and development and has a growing portfolio of products and services spanning the poultry, swine, ruminant and aquaculture sectors. AB Vista is headquartered in the UK, with regional offices located in the USA, Brazil, Singapore, Spain, India, China, Germany and Finland.

AB Vista is part of AB Agri, the agricultural division of Associated British Foods, one of Europe's largest food & retail companies with a market capitalisation of £22 billion.

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