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ACADEMIA AND INDUSTRY DETERMINED TO UNLOCK ANIMAL PERFORMANCE GAINS THROUGH PRECISION NUTRITION

New discoveries in the science that underpins feed efficacy could bring significant value to the animal feed industry, according to academics and researchers at a recent industry summit.

The 3rd International Phytate Summit (IPS3), held in November, hosted by the University of Arkansas, the University of Illinois and AB Vista, brought together top scientists and nutritionists from 22 countries to discuss the positive benefits of precision nutrition, and in particular – the destruction of the anti-nutrient phytate.

AB Vista senior research manager, Dr Carrie Walk, said new understandings revealed at the meeting of the wide-ranging negative impacts of phytate on animal nutrition, are likely to bring about positive changes to dietary formulation.

“We know that phytate destruction in the intestinal tract has massive benefits on nutrient utilisation and performance.

“Four or five years ago people were using phytase to release phosphorus. Now we understand more about phytate and its influence on nutrients as well as animal performance, and can formulate diets based on more

complete phytate destruction and provision of nutrients beyond phosphorus.”

Hans H. Stein, Professor of Animal Science at the University of Illinois, agreed, adding: “Currently, discussion in the swine industry is focused on calcium digestibility and formulating diets based on digestible calcium. Results of research indicate that phytase increases calcium digestibility – so this effect should be taken into consideration when it comes to diet formulation.”

IPS3 saw a renewed commitment between academics and industry representatives to connect the science of enzymes and feed ingredients to real-world application, said Dr Mike Kidd, University of Arkansas. One such area of research is amino acids – where under or over-supply can significantly impact animal performance.

“Phytase appears to influence amino acid digestibility, so researching the underlying mechanisms is really important if we’re going to take the next steps in understanding what’s going on.

“We look at data and think about phytate and phytase – but can we look at it and say phytate has changed the amino acid requirement of a chicken?”

Professor Merlin Lindemann of the University of Kentucky said that such new developments in the industry’s understanding of nutrition could have a significant impact on feed formulation.

“When one realises that the benefits of superdosing phytase to destroy the anti-nutrient phytate actually go beyond calcium and phosphorus release to amino acid release, trace mineral release, whole body energetics improvement, then one wonders what other unanticipated benefits may there be?”

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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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