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PIG CONFERENCE EXPLORES THE ROLE OF NATURAL MARINE CALCIUM AND MINERAL SOURCES TO OPTIMISE WELLBEING

Up to 60 per cent of all finishing pigs have severe inflammation or actual ulceration, states Ronan Casserly, International Monogastric Nutritionist and Consultant at Celtic Sea Minerals.

Mr Casserly will discuss these findings at next month's 'Advances in Nutrition for Future Challenges' seminar, to be held in Armagh, which will investigate the severity of gastric ulcers in swine and the role of natural marine calcium and mineral sources in optimising pigs' wellbeing.

Commenting on recent farm studies in Denmark and Ireland, Mr Casserly says: "Gastric ulcers may result in reduced feed intake, loss of daily gain and even sudden death, so can result in significant economic loss.

"Gastric ulcers in swine are a condition noted worldwide. It is seen as severe inflammation or actual ulceration in the upper inner part – par oesophagus region – of a pig's stomach. Unlike the rest of the stomach, this area is unprotected by a mucous coating and is less able to withstand acidic conditions."

Mr Casserly explains that although it is unclear what degree of ulcer severity causes pain, there is little doubt the disease can cause pain discomfort and agitation.

“Celtical, a natural marine source of calcium and other minerals, has been demonstrated to alleviate the effects of severe inflammation and ulceration in studies across Europe.

“It acts as buffer in the very upper part of a pig’s stomach, protecting the par oesophagus region from acid erosion and ulceration. Because the buffering capacity of the product is burnt off quite quickly in the upper part of the stomach, there is less buffering material to work on the rest of the digestive tract.

“In fact, studies have shown that because of this, the ph along the rest of the digestive tract is reduced and this should have further benefits in terms of promoting gut health and healthy microbes.”

Also speaking at the seminar is Dr Georgina Crayford, a Senior Policy Advisor for the National Pig Association, who will explore antibiotic use in pigs, providing an update on changes to EU legislation on veterinary medicines and medicated feed and explain how these might impact the pig industry.

“Having just finished a year of travelling the world meeting pig farmers, vets and industry organisations and looking at antibiotic use in pig production, I will share my key findings and recommendations for how the pig industry might achieve more responsible use of antibiotics.”

Dr Gustavo Cordero, Global Swine Technical Manager at AB Vista, will discuss enhancing nutritional performance at each stage of pig production.

The event starts at 6pm on March 7th with a welcome dinner preceding a keynote presentation from the National Pig Association. Although a free-event, spaces are limited and attendees are asked to register at

www.abvista.com/pigconference before the 1st of March to secure a space.

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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