



**WESTFLEISCH**  
FROM FARMERS. DIRECTLY.

## Westfleisch "Animal Health" offensive sets new standards

**Together with scientists and veterinarians the meat processor is developing a binding package of measures for more animal welfare in lairages.**

**November 18, 2022**

### **P R E S S   R E L A S E**

**Münster, 18th of November, 2022.** "Westfleisch is putting the issue of animal welfare and animal health to a new level!" With these words, Michael Schulze Kalthoff today announced the Westfleisch "Animal Health" campaign. "As a cooperative and partner of farmers, we see our role as equally supportive and demanding," explained the board member of the Münster-based meat processor. "Therefore, we rely on a differentiated approach and a corresponding series of increased control, systematic analysis, suitable advice derived from this, and ultimately stricter consequences."

In developing and implementing the Westfleisch "Animal Health" program, the cooperative is working closely with representatives from science and veterinarian health. The focus is on six key aspects: Binding specifications for cooperation between farm veterinarians and farmers, a closer exchange with official veterinarians, deeper data analysis according to aspects relevant to animal welfare, the increased use of artificial intelligence, stricter measures and consequences, and the installation of an ombudsman as a permanent intermediary.

"The aim is for us to provide better preventive advice, raise awareness and provide even stronger support to farms in the future with our Westfleisch 'Animal Health' campaign," emphasizes Schulze Kalthoff. For Dr. Martina Oetjen, veterinarian and head of quality management at Westfleisch, the company is now also taking a decisive step towards achieving higher animal welfare in all lairages "In recent weeks, we have been able to take the important first steps with all sides in a very trusting and targeted manner," says Schulze Kalthoff. He is confident that the high pace of implementation will continue: "Thanks to our close ties to the agricultural sector, Westfleisch is the only company among the major meat processors that can implement such a concept quickly and effectively."

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# Westfleisch Program ANIMAL HEALTH



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## Key aspects of the new Westfleisch „Animal Health“ program

### 1. Binding specifications for the cooperation between farm veterinarians and farmers.

The cooperation between our farmers and farm veterinarians is contractually regulated. In future, we will make more binding specifications here, for example with regard to a higher visiting frequency.

### 2. Closer exchange with official veterinarians

Official veterinarians work in our factories permanently to examine every animal and every carcass. In the future, we want to significantly strengthen the existing exchange with these experts and improve the flow of information - the same applies to the official veterinarians who inspect our suppliers.

### 3. Deeper analysis of data: more effective evaluation of diagnostic data according to aspects relevant to animal welfare

Today, we already collect over a dozen diagnostic data for each animal, all of which have so far been evaluated with the same weighting. In the future, we will evaluate this data even more strongly according to aspects relevant to animal welfare, in order to be able to provide better preventive advice to farms with this deeper data analysis.

### 4. Increased use of cameras and artificial intelligence

With the further roll-out of camera technology and artificial intelligence (AI) in our meat centers, we will be able to collect and evaluate even more automated diagnostic data in the future. This will reduce the proportion of subjective impressions and increase objectivity.

### 5. Stricter measures and consequences

In future, a clearly defined cascade of measures will be implemented earlier and more sustainably: We will monitor, advise and admonish our supplying farms more closely - and impose tougher consequences. In case of repeated non compliance following consultation, we will consider separating from farmers who we no longer trust to provide good animal husbandry with a reliably high level of animal welfare.

### 6. Ombudsman as permanent intermediary

Whether farmers, young farm veterinarians, experienced official veterinarians or our own employees: we give all those working in the chain the opportunity to consult an independent third party in uncertain situations: For this purpose, we install an ombudsman as a person of trust and permanent contact person.