

DLG Trendmonitor 2019 – German Dairy Industry

How will the German dairy industry develop in future? The Competence Centre Food of the DLG (German Agricultural Society) conducted a survey on current technologies and trends among leading dairies. Statements by milk experts complement the current survey results.



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22 participants answered the questions on technologies and trends. 36.4 per cent of those surveyed come from companies with a workforce of 1,000 and more, and 50 per cent come from companies with fewer than 500 staff. 23 per cent had a turnover of EUR 3 billion and more last year, while 41 per cent had a turnover of less than EUR 100 million.

From the economic standpoint, sustainable action and management have played an important role in the dairy industry for many years. This is now becoming even more significant as the awareness of sustainability continues to grow among the population. The sustainability activities of the dairies are communicated comprehensibly, transparently and credibly to all the interest groups. Investments in green sustainability therefore play a major role, as do production and data safety, validated processes and an improved product quality. Investments in expanding capacities, on the other hand, are only estimated as very important by 14 per cent.

New processes and technologies frequently make a key contribution to corporate success. 41 per cent of those surveyed already use robot technology in production, and 50 per cent use it in packaging. In the production sector, 18 per cent plan to use robot technology in the next three years and 14 per cent are planning this for packaging. The “Smart Factory” has not yet materialized among any of the participants. However, 32 per cent of those surveyed plan to implement the vision of a production environment in which production facilities and logistic systems are largely organized independently of any human intervention in the next three years.

Digital transformation

The digital transformation has already taken place primarily in the fields of “traceability and transparency” (77 per cent), “sales-promoting communication” (73 per cent), and “data and production safety” (68 per cent). Further business sectors that have already been digitally transformed, or where this is planned within the next three years, are “energy management”, “waste avoidance by efficient processes”, and “in-house company data management”. It is becoming clear that the trend is moving towards digital transformation. Thirty-six per cent of the companies responding to the survey conduct online trade. Fifty-five per cent are not planning this. Thirty-two per cent are already working with individual products or small batch sizes – and 27 per cent are doing so for individual packaging operations. Furthermore, 27 per cent aim to implement individual products and packaging in the next three years. Predictive Maintenance, systems for forward-looking maintenance of equipment and production lines is used by 27 per cent of the participants. Thirty-two per cent are planning to introduce this in the next three years. Twenty-three per cent of those questioned use digital business models, and 41 per cent are planning to do so in the next three years.

Further information and contact

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