



## ‘We have identified the areas of meat production where our carbon footprint can be reduced’

As Europe’s largest organic meat company, Friland has decided to make an even greater effort for the environment.

Even a front runner can run faster. That is the mindset of Friland, a company that for the past 25 years has been selling meat from farmers whose methods are based on animal welfare and organic production. Friland has a long history of pushing the sustainability agenda, and is now ready to go even further in the fight to improve the climate and reduce CO2 emissions, says the company’s CEO, Claus Hein:

‘Animal welfare, biodiversity and organic production have always been synonymous with our values here at Friland. As the climate change agenda has come to dominate the political domain in recent years, it is only natural that also we should take a stand. Consumers expect us to work dedicatedly to reduce CO2 emissions and we are determined to meet those expectations. The meat production of the future needs to be more climate friendly. Otherwise, there might not be a demand of meat products at all.’

Taking a stand for the environment has always been a part of Friland’s company identity. When a small group of idealistic farmers joined forces behind a young director from business school back in 1992 – the initial idea was to create a sustainable alternative to traditional, industrial pig farming.

‘The word fri (free) refers to our business values, pointing to our freedom of choice in what type of farming we support – one that puts animal welfare and their natural behav-

### Sustainable Development Goals at play

#### SDG 2: Zero hunger

Target 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality.



our first. It is important for us that the animals live good and free lives before reaching the dining table. That is how we've been operating for almost three decades now,' says Claus Hein.

Even if animal welfare and organic breeding is a more explicit criteria in consumer habits today than it was back in 1992, Claus Hein acknowledges that the company cannot rest on its previous achievements:

'When we started, only one in four consumers knew the red ecolabel; today that figure is close to 100 per cent. As organic first movers, we've been at the forefront of this revolution, witnessing a remarkable change in consumption patterns. The climate revolution that is now advancing comes with even greater transformative power as well



as a global reach. The fundamental change it suggests would bring an amazing development for our planet.'

In the SDG Accelerator programme, Friland has worked on measures to reduce CO2 emissions at the individual farm level. More specifically, the company has identified the phases and areas of meat production that generate the highest amounts of CO2 emissions. The mapping has kick-started the development of strategies and methods aimed at minimizing the climate footprint of their entire production, Claus Hein explains:

'This new initiative is something we have worked very hard on, and we also have high expectations to the resulting outcomes. Initially, we focused on the areas with the largest climate footprint, namely beef production. Now, we are also developing a long-term model, where farmers will receive additional payment for their meat, depending on the climate-efficiency of their production. Farmers and Friland must take the lead in this development together, as we are entering a whole new era of climate adaptation.'

Overall, Claus Hein is proud to be part of a movement that fundamentally has changed the way we look at animal farming in relation to environmental impact:

'Friland started off as a pioneer, and that is a company identity we must hold on to. Today we supply meat to Western European markets but also to more remote ones, including New Zealand and the US. The reach of our business confirms the fact that we are part of a global movement for more biodiversity, sustainability and animal welfare. A better starting point for running a business hardly exist.'

#### **This is how Friland contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals**

- Friland has identified the areas and phases of meat production that cause the highest amounts of CO2 emissions.
- At the same time, Friland has devised strategies and methods for optimising the farms towards a climate-friendly production.

#### **Facts about Friland**

- Founded in Denmark in 1992
- Became part of Danish Crown in 1999, although still with its own board of directors
- Europe's largest organic meat company
- Head office in Randers, Denmark
- Approximately 30 employees



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Claus Hein  
CEO, Friland