The DTU Ossabaw Facility

A European hub for research on obesity and lifestyle disease integrating a superior large animal model of obesity with large animal bioimaging facilities

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The DTU Ossabaw Facility: A European hub for research on obesity and lifestyle disease integrating a superior large animal model of obesity with large animal bioimaging facilities

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Technical University of Denmark (DTU), Department of Health Technology operates the DTU European Ossabaw Facility, established as the first non-US Ossabaw pig breeding colony in the 2018. The vision is to develop the Ossabaw facility into a European hub for research on obesity and metabolic syndrome (metS). With an import permit and approved as breeding site for pigs for scientific research, and under the DTU animal experiments policy, further approvals have been obtained from the Animal Experiments Inspectorate under the Danish Veterinary and Food Administration for diet experiments and procedures (sampling). A good dialogue with this board has been instrumental in getting approvals in place for other diets and/or diet experiments of longer duration, other types of sampling (biopsies) and testing controlled oral delivery in the model. A central experimental log also has to be maintained and continuously updated and revised for inspection by the Authorities. All experimental approvals also observe central EU rules on this matter. In addition, some industrial collaborators have their own ethics commitees and will inspect and approve facilities before embarking on a collaboration. Further legislation concerns the import of special diet feed containing animal byproducts, for which a time-limited permission is given and the export of live pigs to other countries in Europe, strictly regulated and controlled to ensure the welfare of the transported pigs. Both of these latter procedures are rather complicated and will be presented in more detail. Finally, we operate a health monitoring program, conforming to FELASA rules, documenting freedom from a broad range of infections which obviously is of great importance for customers and collaboration partners.
At DTU Health Tech the Ossabaw facility will be integrated with a Translational Imaging Center, fully operational later this year, comprising large-animal MR scanning facilities and expertise. Furthermore plans for new DTU housing facility to ensure the continued, high sanitary production of Ossabaw pigs for European research and pharma are being developed, also ensuring continued, easy access to Ossabaw pigs for an increasing number of DTU and national research groups.