



Producing Portugal's Pork

Raporal Sets High Standards for Portugal's Pork Industry

The U.S. doesn't necessarily have a corner on top-notch pork production. Just east of Lisbon, Portugal, a company called Raporal S.A. has been making livestock feed for almost 50 years and producing pork for nearly 40 years. The business employs 300 people and produces 29 weaned pigs/sow/year from its sow herd.

Portugal makes up an area slightly smaller than the state of Indiana and the country's breeding herd numbers around 180,000 sows, so Raporal is an important player.

Committed Leadership

In 1971, a group of 18 pig farmers believed they could add value to agriculture, especially in terms of animal feed production. This led to the creation of Raporal S.A. The first livestock farm for pig production was acquired in 1979. Called the "Gamoal" farm, it started production in 1981 with 500 sows in a closed herd. Today, the same farm has 1,400 sows with PIC genetics, and several other farms have been built, rented or acquired since that time.

In 1986, the company acquired STEC, a slaughter and meat-processing unit. Significant funds were invested to modernize the plant to meet clients' demands.

In 2009, the business expanded to offer farm-to-fork beef and pork, with the opening of its first meat store. Owners wanted control of the variables and a closer connection with consumers.

Raporal offers both beef and pork branded products. The company also produces "white brand" products for other retail companies in Portugal, where they have their own butchers and market their own products. Raporal's brands include: Raporal Feed, Raporal Meats, Rap farms, and Rap Agro.

Name of Operation

Raporal S.W.
Brejo do Lobo
2870-683 Montijo, Portugal
www.raporal.pt

Company Information

- 35,000 tons of feed produced/year
- Owns a slaughterhouse and produces branded meat products
- 370,000 slaughter pigs marketed/year
- 10,000 sows and 750 multiplier sows
- 5,000 beef cattle marketed
- 700 ha (1,729 acres) of agricultural land



Pig Improver

Focus on High Quality Pork

Raporal aims to produce tender, juicy and tasteful meat, the company says. Its products are part of a project carried out with an important supermarket for Portuguese consumers.

Best-management practices, including genetic selection, space allocation, diet, age at slaughter (for optimum intramuscular fat), and composition of nutrients, along with a sound business model, have helped Raporal provide quality products to customers.



Click on image for link to recipe(s)

Genetic Program Growth

PIC has been part of the growth and success of Raporal for the past 23 years, says José Lupi, PIC sales representative for Raporal. The company has offered technical assistance, commercial support and records to show economic and genetic advancement. “The customer believes and has confidence in PIC,” Lupi says. The personal relationship between PIC and Raporal is excellent, and the company is more certain than ever that they’ve chosen the correct path.



Food and Feed Safety a Priority

The feed division’s mission is to manufacture a high quality, stable product, which ultimately increases animal performance. This standard provides for the implementation of a Food Safety Management System, with specific requirements to guarantee the identification of all potential hazards associated with production processes and installations.

Compliance with these requirements allows the company to:

1. Plan, implement, operate, maintain and update a Food Safety Management System to provide products that, according to their intended use, are safe for the customer
2. Demonstrate compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements for food safety
3. Assess customer requirements and demonstrate compliance with mutually agreed upon food safety requirements to improve customer satisfaction
4. Communicate efficiently in matters related to food safety to its suppliers and customers
5. Ensure that it acts in accordance with its Food Safety Policy
6. Place meat and meat derivatives in the market that correspond to consumers' expectations
7. Focus attention on the consumer, with the flexibility to adapt products and services to meet market demands

“Today, the evolution of animal nutrition and technology are determinant factors for the diversification of our products,” says Pedro Lagoa, general manager of Raporal



Pig Improver

Competitive Market

Lagoa says the most challenging part of the business is the sale of meat. Portugal depends on other countries for about 40% of its meat. However, within the country, there are hundreds of meat brands that sell products for the domestic as well as export markets. Raporal sells to countries in Europe, Africa, South America and Hong Kong. He explains that there are three strong companies in the retail sector with about 75% of the sales, so being competitive on price and quality is a high priority.

Meeting environmental regulations is another challenge, because the costs are high and the requirements are strict. Finding employees is also difficult, as it is in the U.S. Portugal's unemployment rate is 6% and it's difficult to find workers, and the farm often uses foreign labor.

Still, Lagoa says it's gratifying to see the company's hard work and dedication recognized by customers and consumers. A foundation of teamwork and commitment is the basis of success for this company.



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A Bright Future

Since 2008, Raporal S.A. has reinforced its market position, and it plans to continue innovating in the years to come with acquisition or rental of more farms for both pork and beef production, thus demonstrating its dynamic competitiveness.

"The last investments by our company were in a corn dryer for the feed mill in 2015, construction of a 3,000-pig finishing building and construction of a meat-freezing unit with the capacity to process 50 tons of meat per hour," Lagoa says.

"This customer has a past, present, and future with PIC," Lupi says. The farm's chief objective is to produce high quality products while controlling sanitary conditions and hygiene, water, pests and diseases; as well as provide training in worker safety and environmental sustainability.

In upcoming *Pig Improvers*, PIC will provide you with the latest guidance on several aspects of optimal ventilation management with "Getting it Right: Temperature and Ventilation".

Our future – and yours – has never looked so bright, as PIC continues to deliver on our promise to **Never Stop Improving.**