



## BESTMIX® LIMS makes quality assurance affordable for animal feed production company ABZ Diervoeding

***“All analysis data is supplied to us by the lab in XML format, which we can simply read in BESTMIX® LIMS. This saves us one and a half days a week!”***

*Nicolette van den Brand, KAM (quality, labour and environment) co-ordinator, coöp. Arkervaart-BramecoZon U.A.*

**ABZ**Diervoeding

An animal feed production company, ABZ Diervoeding (formerly Arkervaart) watches over the quality of the raw materials and end products. The old quality data system required a lot of manual work. Data input had to be made more efficient and the information had to be available sooner to optimise animal feed production. It required an efficient processing of the quality data which in the past proved very tricky because of the re-entry of data and manual conversions. Adifo, the vendor of the MILAS® ERP and BESTMIX® formulation package, presented the new BESTMIX® LIMS platform to manage samples and analysis results.

Coöp. Arkervaart-BramecoZon U.A., a merger of ABZ Diervoeding (formerly Arkervaart) and BramecoSun, is a leading company in the field of livestock feed. The headquarters is located in Nijkerk (the Netherlands). There are additional production locations in Eindhoven, Markelo, Leusden and Udenhout. The company's mission is to increase the return of agricultural entrepreneurs all over the Netherlands by excelling in the field of animal feed and customer service.

## Overview

Country: the Netherlands  
Sector: Animal feed production

## Profile

Coöp. Arkervaat-BramecoZon U.A. is a medium-sized producer of animal feed for all livestock and produces more than 500,000 tonnes of feed a year with 150 employees.

## Challenge

The follow-up of the analyses of the raw materials and end products was very time-consuming with a serious chance of errors being made. Arkervaat looked for a way to make the management more efficient.

## Solution

Adifo installed the BESTMIX® LIMS platform at ABZ Diervoeding to manage samples and analyse results and to share this information between different departments. Adifo also provided the necessary links with the ERP system and Excel for reporting and certification purposes.

## Benefits

- Central management of all samples and analysis results, to be consulted from various locations.
- When requesting samples, the supporting documents for the lab are printed immediately.
- Analysis results are read into the system immediately, manual conversions or time-consuming re-entry of data are a thing of the past.
- Aberrant results are immediately processed in BESTMIX®, so that the customer is always certain of the composition of his product.
- Exchange of data with Excel and the ERP system contribute to reports and certifications.

“Based on the raw materials we formulate the best feed at the sharpest price. Under the motto of ‘every farmer its own feed’, we have composed thousands of recipes”, explains KAM co-ordinator (quality, labour and environment) Nicolette van den Brand.

To optimise ABZ Diervoeding's recipes we have used Adifo's BESTMIX® formulation software for a long time already.

## Follow-up of lab samples is very labour-intensive

Providing quality also means measuring quality, both the raw materials and the end products. That is why ABZ Diervoeding has samples checked at various laboratories on nutritional values, contaminants and bacterial properties.

“The laboratory results used to be collected in different Excel sheets. This was a manual job which required a lot of time. And often, this resulted in delays in processing. In addition, not all laboratories expressed the nutritional values in the same unit, and some of the results needed to be converted. Per sample it concerns various analysis parameters. Because of the manual introduction, this method of working was subject to errors - which is something you want to avoid with quality data. By improving this process, ABZ Diervoeding made a great leap forwards”, says Nicolette van den Brand.

## Planning analyses ahead in BESTMIX® LIMS

During the periodic consultation with Adifo, the laborious and time-consuming management of samples and quality data came up. Adifo suggested BESTMIX® LIMS, a platform for the management of samples and analysis results that works fully integrated with BESTMIX® Feed. Analyses and results can be shared on this platform with various employees.

“I plan all analyses per production location one month ahead. When the quality employee prepares the samples in the factory, the package suggests what analyses should be carried out and immediately prints out a supporting document. From my workplace I am able to follow what samples have been sent and when the lab calls with additional questions, I can open the request and view the sample. We used to have to go through the folders with job forms to answer a question of the lab”, explains Nicolette Van den Brand.

## Efficient co-operation with external laboratories

ABZ Diervoeding works with various laboratories. Most labs provide test results in an electronic results message in XML format that was drawn up by Adifo and is currently standard for many laboratories in various countries.

Nicolette van den Brand explains how this is processed: “For each external laboratory we set how data needed to be linked because the codes of the properties and units are unique for every organisation. The links allow us to easily read incoming XML messages in BESTMIX® LIMS. And this saved a lot of time!”

## Higher-quality feed thanks to BESTMIX® LIMS

“BESTMIX® LIMS allows us to monitor the quality of the supplied raw materials from close-by. Reference values and tolerances were set for every raw material for this. Now we are informed immediately of any aberrant quality. It means



suppliers and the origin of products can be evaluated better”, says Nicolette van den Brand.

“At least as important is the use of the real nutritional values of the raw materials for the optimisation. With less accurate values for the raw materials you will compose less accurate end products. With BESTMIX® LIMS we are able to calculate average values of samples and compare them with the current nutritional values in the raw material matrix. The matrix will be adapted more often. This process is very transparent and simple for us now. In general: the more you invest in the correct input of data, the more time you save later and the better the results.”

### **BESTMIX® LIMS also contributes to certification and reporting**

For the approval of new recipes, the calculated nutritional values generated by BESTMIX® are immediately included in the LIMS software, i.e. before the new recipe goes into production. This means we always have the correct reference values when evaluating the samples of the productions.

ABZ Diervoeding is a participant of VoederWaarde.nl, a Dutch monitoring system for mixed feed production. VoederWaarde.nl provides openness in terms of recipes and monitoring the nutritional value. Adifo built a bridge between the BESTMIX® LIMS database and Excel worksheets that ABZ Diervoeding needs to supply every quarter for the quality control. Again, this results in time savings and the exclusion of errors due to manual processing.



### **Conclusion**

During the implementation of BESTMIX® LIMS, Adifo's advice was invaluable. Nicolette van den Brand: “Adifo's technical knowledge and our own animal feed knowledge resulted in a positive interaction. Adifo understands the needs of an animal feed producer like no other and helped us with the best possible implementation of the product. We are very happy with the co-operation, advice and guidance.”

“Because all test results are processed quicker, you can use the exact value of raw materials more actively and the customer is certain that the label of the products is correct. For us it is important because we are very close to our cattle farmers: in terms of the number of eggs, the number of piglets, etc. The more efficiently we manage the quality of our ingredients and feeds, the cheaper quality feed becomes for our customers. BESTMIX® and LIMS make top quality affordable”, concludes Nicolette van den Brand.



More information on ABZ Diervoeding?  
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