

Making the complex less complex

Martine Boon new managing director at GMP+ International

With relevant knowledge from her Rabobank days and a strong focus on sustainability, Martine Boon recently started as managing director at GMP+ International. High on the agenda are international growth, the further development of the feed safety scheme and making the more sustainable. Martine: "There is a lot coming up on the sector off. We want to help the industry by making complex issues as simple as possible."

Martine Boon has been at the helm of GMP+ International since November 1. She comes from Rabobank, where she worked as director of Food & Agriculture Transition and Sector Management. "There I was mainly concerned with financing policy and the future of agricultural sectors in the Netherlands: how can we ensure that they retain their license-to-operate rate?" With the move to GMP+, she wants to work concretely to make this sustainability move, together with the animal feed sector.

"The main motivation for the switch is that I can now lead developments that are important for the future." By this Martine is referring to the sustainability ambitions that GMP+ has. Last year, the organization already announced that it was changing its payoff from 'Feed Safety Worldwide' to 'Safe and sustainable feed, worldwide' and took two new standards into use: one on responsible soy and one pilot standard on calculating the carbon footprint of animal feed. A standard around EUDR is in the works.

"The sector is already in full swing, but at the same time there is still quite a way to go. By GMP+, I can really make an impact: working the sector towards more sustainable animal feed production."

Using acquired knowledge

Martine held various positions inside and outside Rabobank. As a result, she especially has a lot of financial knowledge and knowledge about the future

of food and agribusiness sectors. "At Rabobank, we thought a lot about the future of the agricultural sectors. How can companies deal with ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance, ed.) What choices do sectors and companies have to make? What innovations can help? I can put that knowledge to good use in my current position. Because the animal feed sector also faces a lot. How does a company deal with this and can we ensure that it remains? For example, how do you show as a company that you produce more sustainably? This is what we want to think about and companies in. So that complex matters can remain as simple as possible for customers. Making the complex less complex." Exactly how that will take shape, Martine does not know at this point. "Take, for example, the calculation of the carbon footprint. Is it the task of GMP+ to set up a standard on the basis of which you look, I have my footprint correctly. Or do you have to show as a company that you actually produce more sustainably every year?"

Strong brand

In addition to the sustainability issue, animal feed safety remains at least as important a topic at GMP+. Martine: "We should not forget what already there: a strong scheme and supporting services for animal feed safety. That is our foundation. Over the years there have been very few incidents around feed safety as a result, which is very valuable." Something Martine was positively surprised by

when she started at GMP+: "GMP+ International is a much smaller company than Rabobank, but with a very big impact in the sector. Together with all stakeholders, GMP+ has achieved a lot."

Martine does see the need for continuous improvement of the scheme, however; to this end, research is being conducted among stakeholders. These include improvements in service delivery, more focus on sustainability and more efficient audits. "More risk-based audits for ."

Priorities

In summary, the optimization of services, audits and the further development of sustainability standards are GMP+'s main priorities in the coming years.

'Now I can lead developments that are important for the future'

"So that the sector can continue to make safe and sustainable feed internationally, within the boundaries of ESG." Whether new (sustainability) standards will be needed to achieve this goal, Martine cannot say at this time. "The carbon footprint and EUDR have priority right now. First we want to get a good grip on those two topics. Perhaps other themes will be added later, I am thinking of water, for example."

Uniform standards

The main bumps Martine sees in this regard is that there currently many different standards in the food chain. For example, the carbon footprint within the feed sector is measured on a different



Martine Boon

Position: managing director GMP+ International

Hobbies: reading, running, fitness, culture, good food with family and friends. In addition, Martine is a mentor Food & Agtech Startup at Startlife. This is how she helps startups with her financial knowledge, among other things.

way calculated than within the food sector. "So much is possible. What remedy can we take as a standard? How do we keep it as simple and affordable as possible? In other words, how can we best help customers with their sustainability ambitions? These are important but challenging questions."

Not an easy task, then. Fortunately, Martine does not have to do it alone. She has her team, as well as the GMP+ Community who can help her

help. "That's what I like about GMP+: we listen carefully to our community; they indicate what is needed. A nice structure has been set up for this, with the International Expert Committee and the subcommittees."

Taking into account and listening to the needs of stakeholders is not new to Martine. "It is something I get a lot of job satisfaction out of: doing together with colleagues and stakeholders what is important for the future."

Where Martine hopes to be in five years with the

organization? "I hope we will then a greater impact on both the topics of feed safety and sustainability. I hope we can further strengthen the internationally, by certifying more companies. In Asia, Brazil and Eastern Europe, for example, there is still much to achieve. In some countries there are still no standards at all for feed. And in addition, in the future we hope to support as many customers as possible in achieving their sustainability goals.■"