



Is IHN spread via (fish) feed produced in Denmark?

It is highly unlikely that IHN is spread via (fish) feed produced in Denmark. Below, you can read about the requirements for feed.

Specific requirements for feed containing animal by-products

Most of the feed materials used in fish feed are of animal origin (i.e. derived from animals). Fishmeal constitutes the largest animal component of fish feed. Therefore, procedures to ensure compliance with the cannibalism ban (i.e. that fish are not allowed to eat animal material of their own kind) have been established by Danish fishmeal factories. Consequently, fishmeal factories supplying fishmeal for production of fish feed, are not allowed to receive raw materials made from salmon and trout species, which are the species being infected with IHNV.

In the EU, strict requirements for the use of animal feed apply, and the authorities closely monitor every link in the processing chain. There are legal requirements to ensure that only products from healthy animals may be included in feed production. In order to fight livestock diseases, the processing methods of animal feed materials include heating and sometimes high pressure. This treatment will also fight IHNV, if it unexpectedly should be present.

During production of the final fish feed, where processed animal products are included as an ingredient, additional heat and high pressure treatments are performed to (among other things) fight Salmonella. These treatments will also fight IHNV, if it unexpectedly should be present.

General requirements for feed

Feed may not be sold if it is considered a potential danger to human or animal health.

Producers and distributors of feed (including fish feed) in Denmark must be registered in accordance with the Consolidation Act on feed and feed companies. They must comply with feed hygiene requirements, including preventing, eliminating or minimizing hazards that could compromise feed safety. Feed companies with production chain activities after primary production must apply written procedures based on the HACCP principles, which includes establishing their procedures based on a risk analysis. Identical principles apply for food companies. Feed companies only conducting primary production must also follow rules of good practice, but these are not obliged to establish written procedures.

The abovementioned requirements entail that feed business managers should stay informed about current conditions, e.g. that IHN has been detected in fish in Denmark, and, if necessary, change company procedures.