Overview of Key Feed Production and Insights

Aquaculture is a fast-growing sector of livestock production but has attracted criticism owing to the practice of using marine ingredients as feed, usually in the form of fishmeal and fish oil.

Here's a comprehensive overview of Alltech's Agri-Food Outlook 2025, highlighting the key feed production statistics and sector insights for 2024.

Global Feed Production by Region, 2024

Total global feed tonnage in 2024: **1.396 billion metric tons** (up 1.2% from 2023).

Region	2024 Feed Tonnage (million mt)	Growth (%) vs. 2023	
Asia-Pacific	533.1	-0.8%	
North America	290.7	+0.6%	
Europe	267.8	+2.7%	
Latin America	198.4	+3.6%	
Africa	57.8	+7.2%	
Middle East	37.7	+2.8%	
Oceania	11.0	+2.5%	
Global Total	**1,396.4**	**+1.2%**	[1]

Asia-Pacific remains the world's largest feed-producing region, though it experienced a slight decline largely due to a slowdown in China. Latin America and Africa saw robust growth driven by poultry, pork, beef, and expanding commercial feed usage.[1]

Top 10 Feed-Producing Countries, 2024

Rank	Country	2024 Feed Tonnage (million mt)	Growth (%)

1	China	315.0	-2.0%	
2	U.S.	269.6	+0.7%	
3	Brazil	86.6	+2.4%	
4	India	55.2	+4.6%	
5	Mexico	41.4	+1.4%	
6	Russia	38.5	+8.5%	
7	Spain	36.0	+1.5%	
8	Vietnam	25.9	+3.4%	
9	Türkiye	24.5	+4.8%	
10	Japan	24.3	+0.1%	[1][2][3][4]

Together, these countries account for **65.6% of the world's feed production in 2024**, with over half of global feed produced by just China, the U.S., Brazil, and India.[1]

Feed Tonnage by Sector, 2024

Sector	2024 Feed Tonnage (million mt)	Global Share (%)	Growth vs 2023 (%)
Poultry	595.8	42.7	+1.7
Pig	369.3	26.4	-0.6
Dairy	165.5	11.9	+3.2
Beef	134.1	9.6	+1.8
Aquaculture	53.0	3.8	-1.1
Pet	37.7	2.7	+4.5

Equine	9.6	0.7	+2.3	
Other ruminants	23.6	1.7	+2.1	
Other species	7.9	0.6	-3.8	[1]

Sector Insights: Feed Usage & Advantages

- **Poultry Feed:** Remained dominant globally, led by demand for affordable and convenient protein. Broiler feed alone was 385.4 million mt (+1.8%). Growth was most robust in Latin America and Africa, aided by lower feed costs and consumer preference for cheaper protein sources. Disease outbreaks (Avian influenza) moderated growth rates, especially in North America and Asia, but improved biosecurity and regional shifts toward local production are expected to sustain growth.[1]

- **Pig Feed:** 369.3 million mt (-0.6%). The only major sector to decline in 2024, mainly due to African swine fever (ASF) and oversupply in Asia-Pacific—especially in China. Growth returned in Europe and Latin America due to export demand and stable feed prices. Efficient feed conversion and disease management are key to profitability.[1]

- **Dairy Feed:** 165.5 million mt (+3.2%), driven by strong consumer demand, higher milk yields, and more intensive production methods. Modernization, including precise nutrition for milk yield and animal welfare, allows optimal feed utilization.[1]

- **Beef Feed:** 134.1 million mt (+1.8%). Growth was highest in regions like Oceania (+11%). The sector uses high-energy rations for finishing cattle and has seen efficiency gains from feedlot usage, especially in Australia and North America. Rising beef prices incentivized feed usage despite climate and supply constraints.[1]

- **Aquaculture Feed:** 53.0 million mt (-1.1%). Production declined slightly, reflecting disease challenges, particularly in Asia-Pacific. Sustainability mandates, especially in Europe, are shifting feed formulas toward resource-efficient and novel ingredients (insect, fermentation, or byproduct-based proteins). Best practices include tailored feeds for specific species and life stages to maximize growth, health, and environmental benefits.[1]

- **Pet Feed:** 37.7 million mt (+4.5%). The fastest-growing sector, driven by rising pet ownership and premiumization. Producers are focusing on ingredient quality, functionality (e.g., for skin, digestion), and overall pet health.[1]
- **Equine Feed:** 9.6 million mt (+2.3%). Growth remained steady due to demand from sport and recreational horse sectors, with specialized, high-nutrient feeds for performance and health.[1]
- **Other Sectors:** (e.g., minor ruminants, “other” species) grew in most regions **due to expansion of commercial feeds in emergent markets and specialty livestock**.[1]

The agri-food sector demonstrated notable adaptability in 2024, navigating disease challenges, economic pressures, and sustainability demands. Strategic feed use continues to underpin competitive success and resilience across all major animal protein sectors.[2][3][4][1]

Alltech explains each sector’s optimal feed use and benefits by emphasizing how tailored nutrition and feed management practices maximize production efficiency, animal health, and economic returns while addressing sector-specific challenges and opportunities. Here’s a breakdown by sector based on their Agri-Food Outlook 2025:

- Poultry: Optimal feed use centres on delivering cost-effective, nutrient-dense rations to support fast growth rates and high feed conversion efficiency. Disease management, especially avian influenza biosecurity, is critical to maintaining production stability. Focus is on balancing energy and protein while meeting welfare standards to produce affordable protein efficiently.
- Pig: Feed strategies prioritize managing disease pressures like African swine fever and nutritional efficiency to maintain steady growth and profitability amid market fluctuations. Precision feeding supports animal health and meat quality, while adapting to regional variations in supply and demand.

- Dairy: Dairy feed is optimized by formulating rations that enhance milk yield and quality, balancing energy, protein, and fibre. Improved feed conversion translates to better economic returns and animal welfare. Emphasis is on nutritional precision to sustain productivity and meet evolving consumer demands.
- Beef: The sector uses high-energy finishing feeds, notably in feedlots, to accelerate growth and improve carcass quality. Adaptive feeding strategies optimize the balance between pasture and supplemental feeding, increasing efficiency, especially in areas like Oceania and North America.
- Aquaculture: Feed formulations are customized for various species and life stages, focusing on sustainability and reduced environmental impact. Advances include incorporation of alternative proteins such as insect or fermentation-based ingredients. The goal is maximizing growth, disease resistance, and feed utilization while addressing regulatory and ecological pressures.
- Pet: Premiumization drives focus on ingredient quality, functionality, and health benefits (e.g., digestion, skin). Feed innovation aims at meeting the growing demand for tailored nutrition that supports pet longevity and wellness.
- Equine: Specialized high-nutrient feeds support performance, recovery, and general health needs of sport and leisure horses. Feed programs emphasize balanced energy and nutrient delivery for optimal conditioning.
- Other species: Expanding commercial feeds for minor ruminants and specialty livestock cater to emerging markets, emphasizing tailored nutrition to enhance growth, health, and productivity.

In summary, Alltech highlights that optimal feed use involves combining precise nutrition, health management, and sector-specific innovations to maximize animal performance, support sustainability goals, and improve economic outcomes across all sectors. Each sector’s feed strategy is adapted to meet its unique production environment, species biology, consumer demands, and market conditions.

Take-Away as far as Aquaculture is concerned is that the industry is continuing moving toward sustainable, species-specific diets and novel feed sources.

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