



British Columbia Salmon Farmers Association
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SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE

Fast Facts about Salmon Farming and Sustainability

With global demand for salmon growing, farming is one way to protect a precious — and finite — resource, B.C.'s wild salmon.

- According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, US demand for seafood is projected to increase by 30 – 50% by the year 2010.

Salmon farming is the most strictly regulated agricultural industry in the province.

- Compared against other salmon farming jurisdictions, the B.C. regulatory environment is the most stringent in the world.

To view a comparison of the regulations in BC as compared to other parts of Canada, the US, Chile, Norway and Scotland visit:

http://www.agf.gov.bc.ca/fisheries/Finfish/cabinet/Summary_Table_BC-World_Aqua_Regs.pdf

This fact sheet outlines key details pertaining to industry best practices, supporting science and the rigorous government standards we follow every day

ENVIRONMENT

One way to ensure a safe marine environment is to continuously monitor the environment in and around salmon farms. Farm employees are trained in environmental management and each salmon farm, as a condition of license, requires:

- The completion of detailed, site-specific, environmental assessments before farming begins
- Monitoring the environment and fish health and taking corrective action
- Daily water quality testing
- Regular underwater maintenance of nets
- Sea lice inspection and treatment when three lice are detected on any fish sampled
- Ocean floor sampling to monitor benthic impact
- Routine following of farms
- Use of under water cameras to reduce feed waste
- Research into alternative sources of protein for fish feed (e.g. plant based)
- Funding of research and development activities in conjunction with major universities and professional associations

STRINGENT FARM SITING PRACTICES

- BC salmon farms can only be sited in areas where water currents provide optimal conditions for fish well-being and environmental sustainability. This includes avoiding sensitive wild salmon habitat such as coastal fish spawning and nursery areas.

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- To ensure environmental compliance, all proposed salmon farm sites are subject to detailed review by ten federal and provincial agencies. Annual site monitoring programs ensure continued sustainability and are the most stringent in the country and around the world.
 - All approvals for salmon farms are subject to environmental review, including a thorough analysis of impact on other fisheries and habitats according to federal and provincial government standards.
 - Salmon farmers work with other stakeholders in forums or one-on-one meetings to address specific concerns regarding marine resource utilization.

COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

- Salmon farmers are closely regulated for environmental quality. In addition to annual monitoring by provincial agencies such as the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of Agriculture, Lands and Food, salmon farmers are required to submit to a detailed environmental review for each new farm site under the federal Navigable Waters Protection Act, Fisheries Act and Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.
- Salmon farmers continuously monitor water quality, which is critical for the health and well-being of their salmon.
- To limit nutrient pollution, salmon farmers employ state-of-the-art feed monitoring systems that use real-time technology, such as underwater cameras and sensors, to detect uneaten feed and adjust feed delivery to the appetite of the salmon.
- The Fisheries Act, which governs all aquaculture activities, clearly prohibits the deposit of remains or offal of fish or marine animals on the shore, beach or bank of any water. In addition, provincial regulations build upon federal marine site biosecurity standards, further protecting marine environments.

Traditionally, sustainability has been viewed as a three-legged stool: with environment, social and economics receiving equal attention. When it comes to salmon farming, attention is frequently focused on the environment.

- For salmon farmers, operational success depends on a clean environment.

The **economic and social** ramifications of salmon farming are also important.

- According to research done by PriceWaterhouse Coopers, in 2006, salmon aquaculture's direct, indirect and induced impacts are similar to agriculture and food processing: the industry's economic output in 2006 was over \$800 million and the total employment over 6,000 jobs.
- Aquaculture requires supplies and services and supports hundreds of secondary industries in coastal communities, Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland.
- British Columbia's aquaculture industry leads the fisheries sector when measured against gross domestic product (GDP).

These jobs create social benefits: allowing people to build careers and invest in their home communities.

[Click here](#) to read the story of one coastal communities experience with salmon farming.