



SPAWN WOULD ENDORSE A LAND BASED ATLANTIC SALMON FARM PILOT PROJECT IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR.

SPAWN, The Salmon Preservation Association for the Waters of Newfoundland, believes 2014 is going to be a year of change for the wild stocks of Atlantic Salmon. A year when both levels of Government accept the reality that sea based farming of Atlantic Salmon is old, unsafe technology.

We only need to look to the west coast of Canada to see the results of the first commercial sized Land Based Salmon farm. The Namgis First Nation on Vancouver Island sought to bring salmon farming inland where everything flowing in and out of the facility can be controlled. The following is taken from the Namgis First Nations web site as of March 25, 2014. ***“Very exciting times! The very first premium fish (3 to 5 kg) will now be harvested in early April. Some were already just under 5 kg at only 10 months of age and now, some are over 8 kg! These fish entered the quarantine unit on March 18th, 2013 as cohort #1 and will have grown to harvest size in half the time it takes in open net systems since growing fish on land is not only better for the environment, there are many production advantages. By controlling environmental conditions in closed containment, stresses to the fish are greatly reduced and care of the fish is optimized, leading to faster grow out, 30% less feed being used and without pesticides and antibiotics.***

Check out their web sites,

<http://www.namgis.bc.ca/CCP/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://kuterra.com/>

We have heard for many years now of the many, now in the hundreds of thousands of sea based, sea caged farmed salmon being infected with the deadly ISA virus, having to be destroyed and the millions of dollars being paid of taxpayers money in insurance costs to companies. The cost to destroy diseased fish is estimated to be as high as \$30 per fish.

While the aquaculture industry and both levels of government have always held the position that land based Atlantic Salmon farming was not economically viable, the costs associated with the ongoing and continuing insurance payouts appear to casting a deep and troubling shadow on these positions.

Land based raising of Atlantic Salmon has so much to offer Newfoundland Labrador, that the sky is the limit.

When Atlantic Salmon are raised in a closed system on land there is no possibility of any salmon escaping into the natural environment. No need to worry about storms, seals, whales, sharks or any other natural predator ripping up nets and causing havoc within the industry. Poor farming practices, including those that cause water pollution and other negative impacts on the environment—as well as the overuse of chemicals and antibiotics—*are bad news*.

The new buzz words need to be “**RESPONSIBLY – RAISED**” Atlantic Salmon. Salmon grown without the need from medication cocktails to protect them from the many hazards that exist from salmon reared at sea. Salmon that are not subject to synthetic carotenoids to give them a nice red flesh color. Many land based systems use natural yeast products to produce color.

Land based salmon farms use much less feed to produce a kilogram of fish, the list goes on. The dietary standards of people are evolving. More and more people want sea food products that are produced without the use of antibiotics, growth hormones, and chemical preservatives.

The last two arguments that governments offer in defense of sea based aquaculture relate to cost of production and employment.

As to the product being too expensive, this writer was in British Columbia in early March 2014 and purchased RESPONSIBLY – RAISED Atlantic salmon from a major grocery chain that was grown in a closed contained land based system in Iceland. Iceland has been a leader in the fishery for decades. It is quite obvious that if Atlantic Salmon can be raised in a closed contained system in Iceland and sold for a profit and people are willing to buy that product a half a world away on the west coast of Canada, this industry can be viable in Newfoundland. Iceland is just a bit further east from Vancouver than Newfoundland.

Good paying jobs farming Atlantic salmon can be done in any one of dozens of rural communities across our province. If the Icelandic people can make this work, we can. SPAWN believes that as consumers become better educated surrounding the enormous costs to society and our fragile environment that comes from a very large scale open net sea based caged salmon rearing, they will be more than willing to pay a fraction more for fish that have been farmed in an environment that is much cleaner. A system that is closed to the ocean so there are no escapees mixing with wild stocks of Atlantic Salmon. I am convinced that by moving in this direction both levels of Government and industry will find a solution. A solution that helps save and preserve our precious wild Atlantic Salmon stocks and in doing so the consumer will enjoy a much healthier, tastier meal.

We know that open net, sea based caged aquaculture threatens wild salmon, and we also know that the industry is a profitable one that contributes significantly to local, provincial and national economic accounts. The good news is that an increasing body of evidence shows that land-based, closed-containment aquaculture is an environmentally, technically and economically viable option to net-pen aquaculture. Atlantic salmon, reared on land, grown to market size in about a year, which is “six to nine months sooner than in an open net sea based pen.

It is time for governments at both levels, to explore and fund a pilot project around a RESPONSIBLY – RAISED land based Atlantic salmon farming opportunity here in Newfoundland and Labrador. To continue to bury their collective heads in the salt water of the South Coast is IRRESPONSIBLE, not only to the environment which is suffering greatly under the current fish farming practice. It is ignoring all those rural communities who need an opportunity to grow and expand their economic base.

For further information please contact

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