

# Keo Fish Farms, Inc.

As a producer of sterile triploid grass carp that are a legal alternative to aquatic herbicide application in the state of Washington, I find it somewhat amusing that the Washington Department of Ecology is concerned about the use of a native triploid species, such as rainbow trout, in a confined system (net pens) while allowing the stocking of a non-native triploid species such as the grass carp in public waters. Surely if one triploid species is safe so is the other. The irony of this is beyond me and just goes to show how politicized the issue of net pen culture in the United States has become. Let our food and fiber be raised in other countries with little or no environmental restrictions but do not allow such production in our own country with even extremely strict (i.e. sterile triploid fish) requirements. Talk about a hypocritical "not in my back yard" syndrome. As a certified fisheries professional, I want to go on the record as supporting the right of Cooke Aquaculture Pacific to sustainably raise sterile triploid rainbow trout in an ecologically responsible manner in their net pens in Puget Sound. When I was Chairman of the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and when I was Vice-Chairman of the Arkansas Pollution Control and Ecology Commission, I always believed that the scientific facts should guide our ecological decisions and in this case those facts are on the side of allowing Cooke Aquaculture Pacific to raise sterile triploid rainbow trout in Puget Sound net pens.