

Edward Shallenberger

I would like to comment on Cooke Aquaculture's application to raise triploid rainbow trout in their Puget Sound Net pens.

I have been actively involved in salmonid aquaculture since 1988 raising Atlantic salmon and rainbow trout in Puget Sound net pens, raising triploid rainbow trout in net pens in the Columbia River, as a fisheries biologist for the Colville Confederated Tribes and as a Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP) certification auditor.

Triploid rainbow trout are a logical choice to replace Atlantic salmon in Puget Sound net pens for several reasons:

1. Triploid rainbow trout are sterile and should any escape they will not reproduce or interbreed with native salmonids. Both the Colville Tribes and WDFW recognize this and purchased these fish for release into the Columbia River and other bodies of water in Washington State.
2. Triploid rainbow trout are a salmonid and as such convert feed efficiently. Repeated studies by third party contractors have shown that Cooke farms utilize efficient feeding techniques resulting little or no feed wastage or sediment buildup beneath the cages.
3. Since triploid rainbow trout grow rapidly and reach a harvest size of >3 kg in a year as opposed to Atlantic salmon that reach a harvest size of 5 kg in 18 – 24 months fallow periods will be more frequent.

For these reasons I strongly recommend that Cooke be permitted to raise triploid rainbow trout in their net pens.

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