

National Fisheries Institute

Aquaculture is an important global industry that should be recognized as a fast-growing sector with the potential to create jobs here and improve this country's access to nutritious, affordable food. While half of all the seafood we eat in this country is farmed, the U.S., unfortunately, remains a comparatively minor aquaculture producer. This needs to change. Aquaculture in all of its many forms, will contribute to economic growth and greater food security.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration says, "aquaculture in the United States contributes to seafood supply, supports commercial fisheries, restores habitat and at-risk species, and maintains economic activity in coastal communities and at working waterfronts in every coastal state."

Sustainable aquaculture growth can benefit not only economic and environmental health but public health as well. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend Americans eat at least two to three servings of seafood per week but we eat, on average, just one. A Harvard University study shows low seafood intake is responsible for 84,000 preventable deaths a year in this country. Positive nutrition outcomes coupled with economic and environmental benefits make aquaculture an important aspect of our food security.

Aquaculture is known as one of the most research-intensive, environmentally responsible and commercially sustainable industries in the world. Aquaculture is a science-based business and relies on veterinarians, biologists and feed specialists for advice and oversight on everyday farming practices. Cooke Aquaculture Pacific operations are also BAP (Best Aquaculture Practices) certified ensuring that every step in the aquaculture production chain from feed manufacturing to hatcheries to farming to harvesting to processing is done responsibly.

The Coller Fairr Protein Index, which ranks protein producers on material environmental, social and governance issues against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, ranks aquaculture at the top for sustainability. Fish and shellfish farmed in the ocean are a top food choice for those who want a healthy option while reducing their environmental impact.

The National Fisheries Institute is the largest seafood trade association in the country and represents producers of seafood, wild and farmed; as well as importers, exporters, distributors and foodservice establishments that serve seafood. We believe the application by Cooke Aquaculture Pacific to raise rainbow trout will benefit the people of the state of Washington with needed jobs and the nation as a whole.

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