

Todd MacArthur

Hello,

To state my bias: I am professionally involved in the aquaculture industry. I am also passionate about sustainably producing food in a way that contributes positively to the health of our planet and our species.

With an undergraduate Degree in Environmental Science, and as the 3rd generation son of a cattle farmer. I firmly believe that net-pen aquaculture is the most sustainable source of animal protein for human consumption.

Simply put; If wild fisheries were to meet entire global demand for seafood the ocean populations would be decimated. All agricultural enterprises have impacts on their environment. Agriculture is by its nature an unnatural activity. The environmental impact of Aquaculture per calorie produced is a fraction of those produced in beef, pork, or even almonds.

Aquaculture operators care for their livestock directly in the environment where their activities have the greatest impact. This means that any fouling in the ocean affects their bottom line. This is unlike land based agricultural practices which have created a dead zone the size of Massachusetts in the Gulf of Mexico with no repercussions on the productivity of those operators and no reparations to the industries and wildlife destroyed.

To be clear I do support Wild Fisheries, Land Based Agriculture, and of course Aquaculture. To deny any of these industries the opportunity to develop increasingly sustainable practices seems short sighted and emotionally driven.

Please also consider that for the people who work within this industry, and those industries which support aquaculture: Your decision impacts our ability to put food on our family's plates, as well as our customers.

Thank you to the State of Washington Department of Ecology for considering my comment.
Todd MacArthur.