



Media Release

Issued: 12 December 2018

In a bid to provide the facts regarding salmon farming, coupled with our inability to communicate directly with those people raising these concerns, we are issuing media statements in response to recent claims about the widespread use of chemicals across our farms.

RESPONSE TO PAM WATKINS – CHEMICAL USE IN SALMON FARMING (Facebook posts 6 December 2018).

Dr. Percival is a widely respected aquaculture veterinarian in Australia. The FRDC Report you refer to was undertaken by Dr. Percival for the Federal government with the objective of improving the safety and effectiveness of chemical use in the Australian aquaculture industry.

At the time Dr. Percival was also a member of the Therapeutics Advisory Committee to the Australian Veterinary Association and the Australian representative on an international Working Group aiming to improve the safety and effectiveness of chemical use in the aquaculture industry globally.

Dr. Percival currently works for Huon Aquaculture as our Chief veterinarian and he has provided the following response to Ms Watkins post.

As always, Huon is always prepared to talk directly with any individual or organisation who is interested in knowing the facts about our farming practices.

Huon Aquaculture contact: Pene Snashall psnashall@huonaqua.com.au 0418 313 414

STATEMENT FROM DR. PERCIVAL

“Unfortunately the Facebook post is quite out of date, out of context and misleading, including a lot of repetition which makes it seem more extensive than it actually is. I have tried to deal with each chemical listed in a structured way.

Firstly, it is important to note that while the use of the term “chemical” can be interpreted by some people as necessarily negative in context, it applies to an enormous range of compounds including things like water.

- Sodium chloride is table salt which is obviously used extensively by people in daily life and is the main chemical found in seawater.
- Alanine and proline are two of the twenty amino acids which are one of the central chemicals needed by the human and animal body to function well. They are the building blocks of proteins.
- Inosine is a nucleoside essential in the metabolism of organisms and important to immune system function.



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- Astaxanthin, canthaxanthin and beta-carotene are all carotenoid pigments found naturally in many plants (including many common fruits and vegetables), algae and microorganisms. However, animals such as fish or shrimp cannot synthesize carotenoids and as a consequence they must find these pigments in the food chain. Carotenoids are key nutrients in various biological functions including vision, skin protection and reproduction. They also act as strong antioxidants.

HUON USES A NATURAL SOURCE OF CAROTEINOID IN SALMON FEED CALLED "PANAFERD".

Monophosphate is one of a number of inorganic phosphates used in animal feeds. The use of inorganic feed phosphates is necessary to meet the phosphorous requirements for animal production to ensure optimal growth, fertility and bone development. Phosphorous is indispensable for life and animals cannot live without it.

Propionic and sorbic acids are widely used in food for human consumption to prevent growth of mould. Propionic acid is present naturally in dairy products and occurs ubiquitously, together with other short-chain fatty acids in the gastro-intestinal tract of humans and other mammals as an end product of the microbial digestion of carbohydrates. Propionic acid is considered important for good gut health along with a range of other organic acids. Sorbic acid is a naturally occurring compound that has become the most commonly used food preservative in the world. It is most commonly found in human foods (eg. wines, cheeses, baked goods, fresh produce, refrigerated meats and seafood, canned foods, prepared salads etc.), animal feeds, pharmaceutical drugs and cosmetics.

Only three of the reproductive hormones mentioned are used by Huon: OVAPRIM (salmon gonadotrophin releasing hormone + domperidone), OVAPLANT (salmon gonadotrophin releasing hormone) and methyltestosterone. These are only used on a small number (< 1000) of salmon breeding fish and **NO** breeding fish treated with reproductive hormones are sold for human consumption. The use of reproductive hormones to enhance fertility and breeding strategies is commonplace in livestock industries.

Anaesthetics are sometimes used in fish so that they can be handled safely for procedures like health checks or vaccination without causing any damage or stress. The only two anaesthetic compounds used are benzocaine (commonly used in pain relief gels for human mouth ulcers) or Aquis which is a derivative of the commonly used clove oil.

Formalin (formaldehyde) is only used as an antifungal bath treatment in eggs or small hatchery fish. Therefore, the volumes are relatively small and there is no chance of any residues from these treatments being present in harvest fish. It is also important to note that formaldehyde is a naturally



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occurring organic compound and is an essential intermediate in cell metabolism in mammals and humans. The toxic effects of formaldehyde mainly relate to long term exposure by inhalation or where formaldehyde is added directly to food products.

Ethoxyquin is a very effective anti-oxidant and is approved by the regulatory authorities for use in salmon feed, however the majority of Huon feed over the last twelve months has been ethoxyquin-free and its use is planned to be phased out.

Antibiotics – The antibiotic products Aquacil and Tetraplex are NOT USED by Huon. Huon does however, on rare occasions use small quantities of antibiotics to treat bacterial infections in salmon stock, but this is only done as a last resort to ensure appropriate animal welfare. All treatments are undertaken under the direction of a veterinarian and regulated withholding periods are fully adhered to ensure there are no unacceptable residues in harvest fish. The only two antibiotics used are oxytetracycline and trimethoprim. Huon has only treated one pen of fish in the sea since the start of 2015.

Chorulon (NOT USED)

Ova RH (NOT USED)

LHRHa (NOT USED)

Dihydromethyl testosterone (NOT USED)

Sulphatrim (NOT USED)

Dichlorvos (NOT USED)

Pyceze (NOT USED)

Net Antifoulants (NOT USED)

Disinfectants and cleansers for net-cleaning (NOT USED AT SEA – only at onshore net cleaning facilities where waste water is controlled). Nets are solely cleaned using cleaning equipment that physically removes the fouling without the need for chemicals.