



## BIOSECURITY

- All good farmers take a proactive and holistic approach to safeguarding the health and welfare of their stock. At Huon, this involves feeding quality diets, good site management, fish husbandry, biosecurity measures and of course, vaccinating our stock.
- Biosecurity in its broadest definition is the prevention of disease-causing organisms entering or leaving any site where they pose a risk to farmed stock, other animals, humans or the safety and quality of food.
- Biosecurity in an aquatic environment poses many challenges as often potential pathogens can be carried in wild fish and therefore never totally eliminated from aquatic systems.
- Huon was named as Australian Biosecurity Farmer of the Year in 2013.
- No salmon imports are permitted to enter Tasmania as this has the potential to wipe out the entire industry through the introduction of an exotic disease or pathogen. This is the same with honey, blueberries, shellfish and other farmed Tasmanian products.

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## DISEASE PATHWAYS

Specific pathways by which exotic or new diseases not currently occurring in Tasmanian farmed salmonids could be introduced, or by which existing diseases could be spread between sites include:

- Live fish movements, including the water in which they are transported. Live fish includes: eggs, fry, smolt, broodstock, and harvest fish.
- Infected fish products including: harvest fish, fish products, waste products, and mortalities.
- Contaminated equipment including: farm equipment, transport trucks and boats.
- Staff, contractors and visitors including: vehicles, equipment and protective clothing.
- Wild aquatic organisms (e.g. fish, crustaceans, zooplankton, algae). These species may also be carrying potential pathogens not yet introduced into farmed stock.
- Recreational anglers and wild fishers including: contaminated tackle, vehicles, bait (seafood from the supermarket should never be used as bait).
- Intake water including town, river and bore water sources at hatcheries.
- Wildlife such as birds, rodents and bats.

Once viable disease organisms have entered and established infection at a farm site, it can be very difficult to prevent spread of that organism within the site and limit the impact of disease. Therefore, it is critical that all reasonable measures are taken to minimise the risk of introduction of disease organisms to all sites.

Early diagnosis and notification is essential for effective management of new or emerging risks.



The Tasmanian *Animal Health Act 1995* requires the salmon industry by law to report any case or suspicion of a notifiable animal disease. (see full list of notifiable disease at this link <https://dpiipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/animal-biosecurity/animal-health/notifiable-animal-diseases>).

## HUON VETERINARY HEALTH AND BIOSECURITY PLAN

Huon has a comprehensive Veterinary Health and Biosecurity Plan (VHBP). The VHBP is based on a detailed Risk Assessment Review across Huon operations, consolidated with the collective experience and standard operating procedures of Huon staff over 35 years and an extensive review of biosecurity practices in overseas salmon producing countries. The VHBP describes the principles and procedures used by Huon to maintain the health and wellbeing of fish throughout all stages of the lifecycle from hatchery to harvest. As such, the VHBP encompasses all marine farm, hatchery and processing sites operated by Huon.

The VHBP aims to identify and define areas of management and husbandry where agreed protocols and procedures are targeted to best practice to optimise salmonid health and welfare. The VHBP outlines the objectives and aspirations which are regularly reviewed and updated to promote continuous improvement.

Disease control in aquaculture production requires a holistic approach. Good site management, animal husbandry and rigorous biosecurity measures are central to reducing the risk of disease outbreaks and controlling the spread of infectious diseases.

## TASMANIAN SALMONID INDUSTRY BIOSECURITY PLAN

Tasmania operates strict biosecurity measures to which the salmon industry complies (Tasmanian Biosecurity Strategy 2013-2017 <https://dpiipwe.tas.gov.au/biosecurity-tasmania/biosecurity-policy-strategy-publications/tasmanian-biosecurity-strategy-2013-2017>).

The Tasmanian salmon industry prepared a state-wide biosecurity plan back in 2013. However, following the Blue Future Salmon Conference, salmonid industry veterinarians prepared a more comprehensive updated plan based on the current state of knowledge, learnings from the conference and relevant to the dynamic and evolving industry operations and practices.

The Draft Plan has been reviewed by a third party expert – Professor Larry Hamell (University of Prince Edward Island, Canada). A final version of the Plan has been agreed in consultation with the relevant Tasmanian authorities i.e. Biosecurity Tasmania, Marine Farming Branch (DPIPWE), Inland Fisheries and the EPA.

Industry and government is currently working together (mid 2020) to formalise the implementation of the measures in the Plan and review how the Plan can best be managed within the new Biosecurity Act framework (2019).

## AUSTRALIAN BIOSECURITY FARMER OF THE YEAR

Huon was named Australian Biosecurity Farmer of the Year in the livestock category in 2013. This prestigious award is hosted by the Kondinin Group and ABC Rural. The biosecurity category aims to promote and reward excellent biosecurity practice in Australian industry.

The highly respected industry accolade recognises farmers and farming families who are focused on the biosecurity of their farming enterprise.

**Huon was the first aquaculture company to receive this award.**

