

**Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development
Fisheries and Aquaculture**

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The following is being distributed at the request of the Research & Development Corporation:

Fostering Ingenuity Through Innovation in Research

Provincial Government to Invest \$358,000 in Support of Provincial Salmon Aquaculture Industry

Researchers will use a \$358,000 investment from the Provincial Government to support the growth of the provincial salmon aquaculture industry. Through the research project, alternative methods for sea lice removal at Atlantic Salmon aquaculture sites using cleaner fish, specifically cunners and lumpfish, which are native to the province's coastal waters will be evaluated.

The total project value is \$991,000, which includes a \$258,000 contribution from the Research & Development Corporation and \$100,000 from the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture.

"Research and development is a key building block of the aquaculture sector. Building on the strong collaborative relationships among academic researchers, business and government, this project will enhance capacity in our province and help salmon farmers overcome the fish health challenges posed by sea lice, one of salmon's natural parasites."

- The Honourable Darin King, Minister Responsible for the Research & Development Corporation

This project involves industry collaboration with Cold Ocean Salmon Inc., a subsidiary of Cooke Aquaculture Inc. which operates a salmon aquaculture facility in St. Alban's, where research will take place.

"This innovative project is expected to reduce costs for the local salmon aquaculture industry while allowing it to maintain healthy fish stocks, offer more environmentally friendly chemical-free treatments for sea lice, and enhance its competitiveness in the seafood market."

- The Honourable Vaughn Granter, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture

This project represents an ongoing cleaner fish initiative that was spearheaded at the Ocean Sciences Centre with industry partner, Cold Ocean Salmon, a division of Cooke Aquaculture.

"This research will allow us to increase our knowledge and production of cleaner fish and make significant advances towards these species becoming an important tool to use towards sea lice control in our salmon farms in the region."

- *Danny Boyce, Department of Ocean Sciences, Memorial University*

A multi-faceted research team is conducting research dedicated to developing a "new tool" for industry to use to mitigate and control sea lice on Atlantic salmon. Cleaner fish are fish that provide a service to other species by removing ectoparasites, such as sea lice. Other funding sources include the Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation.

"Aquaculture is the most rapidly expanding food production system in the world, producing about half of the seafood for human consumption. Its expansion has been enabled by substantial investment in research and development. This is another example of the way in which R&D is contributing value to the economy, both globally and locally."

- *Robert Verge, Managing Director, Canadian Centre for Fisheries Innovation*

In 2015, the Newfoundland Aquaculture Industry Association identified sea lice control as a top research and development (R&D) priority for the provincial finfish aquaculture sector. The R&D involves a large-scale field trial using cultured cleaner fish in a sea cage validation trial to test the effective removal of sea lice from farmed salmon. The feeding behavior of the cleaner fish is harnessed to create a natural defense for the farm. The project will deliver innovative methods and technology needed to produce cleaner fish and will be tested in a real-world environment.

"Fish health and welfare is a top priority for us at Cold Ocean Salmon. As farmers we want to take an integrated pest management approach to minimizing the impact of parasites like sea lice on our animals. Our in-house science and our farming teams are extremely pleased to be working with world-class experts at the Ocean Science Centre to solve real world farming challenges."

- *Sheldon George, Newfoundland and Labrador Production Manager, Cold Ocean Salmon*

Funding projects such as this one will help to solidify Atlantic Canada as world leaders in aquaculture innovation and safe farming practices, while at the same time maintaining the prosperity that comes as a direct result of salmon farming operations. Research and

development contributes to long term economic sustainability by initiating new products and services, improving environmental monitoring, and enhancing safety and security. For detailed RDC funding information, please visit: www.rdc.org/funding/.

QUICK FACTS

- The Provincial Government is investing \$358,000 to support the growth of the salmon aquaculture industry in Newfoundland and Labrador.
- To date, the RDC has invested over \$100 million in 571 individual projects and for every dollar invested, \$6 has been leveraged from other investment partners.
- Funding will be used to establish cleaner fish methods for sea lice removal at Atlantic salmon aquaculture sites.
- Additional information about RDC can be found at: www.rdc.org .

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