

## Danish producer: Norwegian salmon farming soon 'a thing of the past'

Production of salmon in sea cages could soon become obsolete, says founder of a Danish on-land salmon farm.



Norway's natural advantages could soon become a thing of the past, says a Danish producer, who recently started producing salmon at a land-based site previously used for farming eel, reported Norwegian newspaper Dagens Naeringsliv (DN).

“Growth in Norway could come to a complete halt once other production systems are employed around the world and not least when consumers realize Norway is up to its eyes in extensive disease and pollution problems. Then it’s not much use singing the praises of natural advantages,” Longsand Laks founder and managing director Thue Holm, said.

Every three months, new fertilized eggs from Iceland arrive at the plant, located in the small Danish town of Hvide Sande. Once the fries reach a weight of a few hundred grams, they are pumped to concrete tanks in a neighboring hall.

There, in 14 concrete tanks, all 15 meters, or 45 feet, in diameter and six meters, or 18 feet deep, the salmon are fed until they reach slaughter weight of six kilograms.

The company plans to produce 1,000 metric tons of salmon annually and the first fish will be harvested in September.

The investment totaling NOK 53 million (€7.2 million/\$9.7 million) is the cost for the construction, land and building up of stock. The EU and Danish authorities have contributed the equivalent of NOK 11 million (€1.5 million/\$2 million). Share capital totals NOK 20 million (€2.7 million/\$3.7 million) with the remainder financed by loans.

“We need to fetch a kilo price of NOK 28 (€3.80/\$5.10) to break even,” Holm said.

More pilot projects are underway. Billund Akvakulturservice has started building a similar plant in the Gobi Desert in China and the Norwegian company Atlantic Sapphire plans to build plants in the United States and southeast Asia.

“The Chinese government in particular is very keen. It has laid a strategy to produce 50,000 metric tons in closed, land-based systems in ten years’ time,” said Holm.

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