



Collaborative Campaigning for Food Sovereignty and Environmental Justice

Hon. John Baird
Minister of the Environment
CC. Hon. Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans; Paul Boothe, Deputy Minister,
Environment Canada; Environment & Fisheries Critics.

December 6, 2010

RE: Objection to Genetically Engineered Fish, Statement from 60 Groups

Dear Minister Baird,

We are writing to share the enclosed statement of opposition to genetically engineered fish, signed by 60 fisheries and oceans conservation, environmental and social justice groups from across Canada. The statement expresses profound concern over the unacceptable risks GE salmon pose to wild Atlantic salmon, and asks that you reject any request for permission to commercially produce genetically engineered fish or fish eggs in Canada.

As you know, US company AquaBounty is requesting approval from the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to release GE “table-ready” salmon into the US food market. However, the company is not currently requesting approval to produce the GE salmon in the US. Instead, AquaBounty, as specified in its environmental assessment submitted to the FDA and publicly released in summary form by the department, plans to produce GE salmon eggs at its facilities on Prince Edward Island, for shipping to Panama for grow out and processing. The company’s plan relies on, and assumes, approval by Environment Canada for the commercial scale production of GE Atlantic salmon eggs on PEI, for international export.

Of immediate concern, is Environment Canada’s refusal to disclose if the department has received a request from AquaBounty and has already begun a 120-day risk assessment towards possible approval of GE salmon egg production.

We ask you to please take swift action to prevent any suggestion that Environment Canada would allow the production of GE salmon eggs.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent and serious matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Lucy Sharratt, Coordinator