

SALMON TROUT FOR JAPAN ON THE RISE

Fully controlling all development stages from egg to final product and adhering to tough grading practices could be the key to Vestsalmon's success in farmed salmon and trout, as exports to Japan soar.

THE FAROE ISLANDS' leading exporter of farmed fish, Vestsalmon, is seeing sales of frozen salmon trout to Japan rising sharply after more than a decade of market development. According to Bogi Johannesen, head of Vestsalmon's Sales Department, the success on the Japanese market rests largely with the company's stringent quality control policies.

Large orders and long-term customer relationships being part of Vestsalmon's preferred way of doing business, the company last year shipped some 2,500 tonnes of salmon trout, at a value of DKK 55 (EUR 7.4 / USD 9.8) million.

However, much in line with most of Faroe Islands' fish farming sector, the company's production of Atlantic salmon currently lies in a state of dormancy. While its trout business is in full swing, exports of salmon have declined dramatically in recent months, following industry-wide stalemate caused by instable markets and widespread disease.

"Faroese salmon farming is approaching an all-time low in 2005,"



Bogi Johannesen, head of the sales department, inspecting processing of Atlantic salmon.

Mr Johannesen remarked. "However, as markets are stabilizing and the effects of disease control measures gradually set in, it is likely to pick up already by 2006. As far as salmon trout is concerned, there are luckily no such issues as ISA [infectious salmon anaemia] and the market has historically been relatively stable. For our part, based on a number of long-term contracts with purchasers in Japan, we have full scale production of trout."

'SUPERB CONDITIONS': Building a solid Japanese clientele takes both time and effort; demands for suppliers' reliability and consistent product quality are no secret, which puts pressure on producers to maintain maximum process control. According to Mr Johannesen, adhering strictly to standards, including trustworthy grading practices, is at the core of Vestsalmon's business concept—and key to its success in Japan. "We offer fresh and frozen fish to major im-

Contributing factors to the high product quality Vestsalmon has become known for could be linked to the freshness of the waters in and around the Faroes, the currents, and the feed used, as well as the special salmon and trout stocks that have been cultivated over the years. But perhaps just as important is Vestsalmon's modern, hygienic processing equipment and the fact that the fish is farmed at the company's own farms, before it is placed in natural Faroese fjords and finally gutted and packed at the company's factory at Kollafjørður. When the fish reaches the slaughtering process, it takes between two and four hours until it arrives in a shock freezer, where it reaches minus 27 Centigrade in a matter of ten hours. From the shock freezer, prior to export shipment by reefer truck or container, the fish is transferred to cold storage.

"Remember that a happy fish makes a happy customer," Mr Johannesen continued. "The confluence of cold currents and the Gulf Stream around the Faroes provide superb living conditions for fish. The natural fjords and the clean environment yield ideal conditions to farm a first class product. We have emphasized the necessity of increased knowledge of the environment, inspection of the production and market. So,

VESTSALMON PF

PO Box 82, FO-410 Kollafjørður

<http://www.vestsalmon.com>

E-Mail: vestlax@vestlax.fo

Tel.: +298 477 000

Fax: +298 477 001

General Manager:

Frimund Hansen

Head of Sales Department:

Bogi Johannesen

Producer and exporter of farmed salmon and trout.

Products – fresh and frozen:

Atlantic salmon (*Salmo Salar*)

Salmon trout (*Oncorhynchus Mykiss*)

in our sea farms, we make the life of our fish as good as possible. It's an advantage that we own and manage all the means of production and in this way have full control of all the stages of the process, from hatchery and breeding to processing and export, so that the product quality meets the demands set by our customers world-wide. We slaughter and pack in accordance with international standards, and we are very keen on keeping strict quality grading practices. And we have been in this business non-stop for about 20 years."

Salmon trout goes by the Latin name *Oncorhynchus Mykiss*. Often called the salmon trout, the taste of this species resembles that of salmon. Its meat is fatty with a pretty pattern and a bright red color, the trout weighs from one to four kilos.

According to Mr Johannesen, characteristics such as these have made the salmon trout very popular on the Japanese market.

