

July 11, 2003

The Spokesman-Review
Letters to the Editor

Via e-mail: editor@spokesman.com

Dear Sir/Madam:

Even a cursory glance at Paul Haeder's "facts" ("Salmon: wild or farmed? Look deeply," July 6) reveals nothing more than an unsubstantiated attack, replete with misinformation he seems to have bought hook, line and sinker.

Haeder alleges farmed salmon is produced "at the expense of other peoples and ecosystems." To the contrary, salmon farming minimizes such expenses by reducing pressure on wild stocks.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) estimates that by 2030 global fish consumption will reach 160 million metric tonnes. But the amount of wild fish available for human consumption on a sustainable basis will be no more than 100 million tonnes. The future shortfall in supply will have to come from sustainable aquaculture.

Haeder alleges farmed fish are produced "unnaturally" using additives "some of which are banned by the Food and Drug Administration." This is categorically untrue. Farmed fish are produced in accordance with US and Canadian government regulations and meet all required government safety standards.

Antibiotics are used far *less* intensively in aquaculture than in land-based meat producing industries. And the use of medicine in animal husbandry is a standard part of modern veterinary practice. To suggest that there is something wrong with treating livestock with medication is as ludicrous as suggesting that humans should give up modern medicine.

Another of Haeder's allegations concerns "social justice issues related to the costs of a farmed salmon industry to local economies, cultures and environment of mostly foreign entities." Speaking for coastal communities in one of those "foreign entities," I can say that *without* the long-term job opportunities provided by the aquaculture industry, many BC coastal communities and First Nations would be facing disaster.

Haeder suggests his argument is supported by "cutting-edge research groups" but goes on to name only the usual suspects, including Dr. David Suzuki and his Suzuki Foundation, whose misinformation campaign against aquaculture is well-known.

One of the foundation's former employees, Lynn Hunter, wrote in an e-mail stating that "tormenting fish farmers is fun."

If Haeder thinks his so-called “cutting-edge research groups” and the information they’ve supplied him with don’t have an unbiased agenda, he’s sadly mistaken.

Sincerely,

Laurie Jensen
President
Positive Aquaculture Awareness