



Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform

## **SAFeway NEEDS TO RE-THINK ALL FARMED SALMON**

**For immediate release**

**April 2, 2008**

**Vancouver, Canada:** Following Safeway's decision yesterday to suspend purchasing of Chilean farmed salmon, the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) is calling on Safeway to phase out sales of farmed salmon from all sources until the industry shifts to more sustainable practices.

Safeway's decision yesterday is the first recognition by the company of one of the many problems associated with open net-cage salmon farming. The massive disease outbreaks on Chilean salmon farms are a manifestation of the inherent flaws of open net-cage farming practices. The concern now is that Safeway will attempt to buy more farmed salmon from British Columbia (BC), Canada where parasite outbreaks on farmed fish are threatening entire populations of wild salmon.

"We applaud Safeway for strengthening sourcing practices. Their decision will encourage the Chilean industry to implement much needed reforms that will address disease problems and protect consumers from the use of excess chemicals," said Catherine Stewart of Living Oceans Society in British Columbia, a CAAR member group. "Safeway, who has been made well aware of the sea lice problems in the BC industry, must now extend their decision to include a phase out of all open net-cage farmed salmon."

The scientific case for eliminating sales of open net-cage farmed salmon from BC could not be stronger. The latest scientific paper documenting the impact of sea lice, published in the *North American Journal of Fisheries Management* this week, reports that infestations have spread from salmon farms to wild juvenile pink, chum, and sockeye salmon as well as juvenile herring. The study's findings are based on research conducted near Campbell River on the east coast of Vancouver Island. Recent research published in the journal *Science*, calculates that sea lice outbreaks from salmon farms in BC's Broughton Archipelago will cause the local extinction of wild pink salmon within the next four years if outbreaks continue.

Salmon farms are responsible for millions of escapes of non-native farmed salmon into the wild, and the depletion of wild stocks of fish which are reduced to pellets for salmon feed. In addition, the farms dump untreated waste directly into the water harming the sea bed and shellfish populations and are responsible for the shooting and drowning deaths of hundreds of marine mammals.

In this move away from Chilean product, Safeway joins Whole Foods who stopped sourcing from both Chile and Canada in January.

"We are appealing to Safeway to become a truly progressive retailer by phasing out farmed salmon from open net-cages and supporting the development of closed containment facilities that address the spread of disease, escapes, pollution and other environmental problems," said Shauna MacKinnon of Living Oceans Society.

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