



Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform

NY Times Ad Calls on Safeway to Stop Selling Farmed Salmon, Demand More Sustainable Product

VANCOUVER, BC -- June 22, 2007 – The Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform¹ (CAAR) is stepping up its market pressure on grocery sector giant Safeway with an advertisement in the Sunday *New York Times* calling on Safeway to stop selling farmed salmon until the aquaculture industry cleans up its act. The “Ingredients for Extinction” ad, playing off Safeway’s “Ingredients for Life” branding, is part of CAAR’s “Smarten Up Safeway” campaign.

“We have been in ongoing discussions with Safeway Canada and Safeway International for over a year,” said Catherine Stewart of the Living Oceans Society, a CAAR member group. “And while Safeway executives have acknowledged the serious problems associated with open net-cage salmon farming they have failed to implement any changes in purchasing practices so far. It’s time to alert consumers to the fact that Safeway is failing to live up to their claims of corporate social responsibility as long as they continue to support the salmon aquaculture industry.”

The ad reaches out to US consumers as more than 80 per cent of BC farmed salmon are sold to the US market. “We placed this ad in the *New York Times* to speak directly to Safeway customers and consumers of farmed salmon, and we hope they will join us in helping to create the shift to a more sustainable aquaculture industry – one that does not threaten the very survival of our wild salmon runs,” added Stewart.

In March, 2006, at CAAR’s invitation, the President and Chief Operating Officer of Safeway Canada, Chuck Mulvenna, toured the Broughton Archipelago on the BC coast and witnessed the fatal impact that sea lice from salmon farms are having on wild juvenile salmon. However, despite an overwhelming body of scientific research detailing the negative impacts of salmon farming, a firsthand look at the areas affected, and increasing consumer awareness of the impacts of this product, Safeway is still unwilling to take a leadership role on the issue.

Farmed salmon are grown in net-cages that float in the ocean, polluting the marine environment with drug-laced excess food and feces. These floating feedlots also allow disease and parasites such as sea lice to flow out through the nets, threatening wild salmon and ocean habitat. Only one company operating in BC – Norwegian-owned Marine Harvest – has engaged in a dialogue with CAAR around the potential for closed containment systems as a solution. With the support of the BC government, closed containment could become a reality in the next few years, addressing many of the problems created by the open net-cage farms.

Recent scientific research published in the esteemed US journal, *Proceedings of the National Academy of the Sciences*, concluded that up to 95 per cent of wild juvenile salmon migrating past salmon farms can be killed by sea lice produced on the farms. A British Columbia government-funded research project

¹ The nine members of CAAR are: David Suzuki Foundation, Friends of Clayoquot Sound, Georgia Strait Alliance, Living Oceans Society, Mugamagw Tsawataineuk Tribal Council, Raincoast Conservation Society, Raincoast Research, T. Buck Suzuki Environmental Foundation and Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

investigating the issue was recently denied access to essential data by the farms, leading to the en-masse resignation of the project's science advisory panel of experts. BC wide polling undertaken in March, 2007 shows that 80.7 per cent of British Columbians surveyed support a transition to closed containment technology for salmon farms – a solution also recommended by the government-appointed Special Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture.

“Safeway’s own literature describes their company as one that is progressive on environmental issues and cares about communities, but their decision to ignore peer-reviewed scientific research on this issue and continue to purchase farmed salmon is in direct opposition to this,” said Dom Repta of the Friends of Clayoquot Sound, another CAAR member. “It is time Safeway took steps toward implementing what they claim are environmentally responsible company commitments. BC’s wild salmon are dying while Safeway’s efforts at “corporate social responsibility” seem to be seriously limited.”

Wild salmon are the foundation of the eastern Pacific food web and vital to the BC economy. CAAR is calling on the salmon farming industry to transition to closed containment systems and for retailers like Safeway to use their significant purchasing power to support the creation of a salmon farming industry that is safe for wild salmon, marine ecosystems and our coastal communities.

Consumers can learn more about the Smarten Up Safeway Campaign at:
www.farmedanddangerous.org/safeway

Formed in 2001, the Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform is a coalition of nine conservation groups, First Nations and scientists from the Pacific Northwest coast working to ensure salmon farming in BC is safe for wild salmon, marine ecosystems, coastal communities and human health.

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View the New York Times Ad on line at:

<http://www.livingoceans.org/smartenupsafeway.shtml>

High resolution copies available on request. Contact Catherine Stewart (above)