

Aquaculture Innovation Network News



Highlights

- How good is the communication between researchers and industry? Aquainnovation is trying to bridging the gap
- Updates on future activities and the development of the project web site
- A focus on Aquapark—the business incubator linked to the Hungarian Research Institute for Fisheries, Aquaculture and Irrigation

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EC Innovation Project: CSN-INTRAN (IPS-2001-42123)

The role of supply companies in innovation

Too often at government and academic levels, discussion about innovation in aquaculture focuses on the activities of the research organisations or the aquaculture producers, and neglects, or at least under-represents the role of supply companies. For example these include the feed and pharmaceutical companies, equipment supply and installation engineers and providers of monitoring and control equipment and information technology solutions. They form a bridge between the government and academic research organisations and the fish producers, providing the physical products that enable the sector to improve efficiency, reduce costs, raise production or introduce new products to consumers. The best of these companies are always engaging with their customers, seeking to find new solutions to their problems and continually adapting and improving their products. Many also engage directly in research, most fruitfully in collaboration with research organisations where more advanced facilities and addi-

tional expertise is available. As a minimum they develop their products using research findings. Once the research phase is over, it is the supply companies that face the challenge of manufac-



Technology supply companies provide practical and commercial solutions to aquaculture producers

turing the new product, and launching it on the market. They are also one of the prime means of technology transfer between countries and regions as they seek new trading partnerships.

Looking forward to Aquaculture Europe 2006

The Aquaculture Innovation Network will be represented at the Trade Show where you will be able to meet consortium partners and discuss the initiative for supporting innovation and technology transfer in European Aquaculture. Further project materials will be available to take away on CD-ROM and staff will also be on hand to help you join the network



through the website partnering facilities. There will also be a chance to see some of the winning entries to the Aquainnovation photography competition.

Project partners will be contributing to conference sessions and special workshops. Full details are available via the EAS website (<http://www.easonline.org/>).

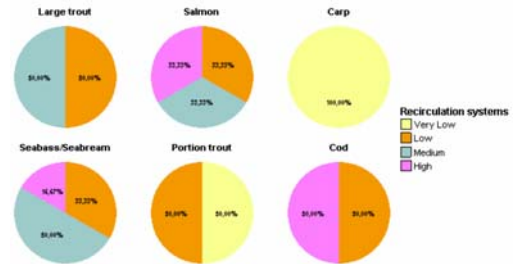


“It is a common complaint of producers that research is not relevant to their needs”

Researching research needs

It is a common complaint of aquaculture producers that funded aquaculture research does not seem relevant to their needs and certainly does not match their perceptions of priorities. There may be many reasons for this, not least because the funders of research and the researchers themselves have wider or more long-term interests in mind. However, for real engagement to take place, it is important for producers to clearly articulate their problems and perceptions of research needs. This has long been a concern of the Federation of European Aquaculture Producers (FEAP) who are a key partner in the Aquainnovation network. Valuable dialogue was initiated through a series of “PROFET” workshops in 2003-2004 (see http://www.aquamedia.org/news/RTD/profet_en.asp). This is now being developed through further

initiatives, including the Aquaculture Innovation Network. A detailed questionnaire has been circulated to FEAP members to help understand their perceptions of research needs across a wide range of technical, market and policy issues. Initial results are already proving valuable.



Views of the different production sectors on the priority that should be given to research on recirculation systems

“The study found a gap in the perceptions of research value between scientists and other stakeholders”



Researching research impacts

As a complementary exercise to the survey described above, the European Aquaculture Society has recently completed a study on the impact of EC-funded research in the aquaculture, fisheries and seafood processing sector between 1994 and 2002 (Frameworks 4 and 5). A total of 389 approved projects were examined with a total value of 381 million Euro. Of these, 165 related to aquaculture (42%). The study examined a range of impact indicators, including the number of patents produced, perceived value with respect to competitiveness, dissemination



to the industry and the involvement of industry in research projects. These were assessed by means of questionnaires to different stakeholder groups. Linkages were also examined between the research and EC policy objectives. The full and summary report are available on the EAS website (<http://www.easonline.org>).

Benchmarking



Your answers are compared with expert-suggested benchmarks and with the other responses received

A new feature of the Aquainnovation web site is the Benchmarking section. This is a collection of short quizzes, each aimed at different groups such as aquaculture producers, researchers, processors etc. The quizzes have just 5 questions aimed at encouraging reflection on different aspects of company or organisation performance. Once complete, your answers are compared with surveyed means and with expected values



from our sector experts. We hope they are interesting and fun. Click on the Benchmarking tab on the website home page.



Each quiz is based on just 5 simple multiple-choice questions

Estonia fish health workshop

This course took place at the University of Life Sciences in Tartu, Estonia from 19-20th January 2006. Prof Patrick Smith (Director of New Business Development) of Schering Plough Animal Health's global Aquaculture unit gave a series of lectures and talks to promote health management within the trout farming sector. The first day of the workshop concentrated on the major diseases for which vaccines were available, and



Course participants

then detailed presentations were given on how to apply these vaccines to achieve the best performance possible. The second day of the workshop concentrated on vaccination strategies to give protection throughout the lifecycle of the fish with particular reference to newly developed oral vaccines.

This workshop will help Estonian trout farmers to improve their own businesses and enable them to become more cost efficient and therefore more profitable through the use of preventative health management solutions. These solutions can potentially also bring about improved animal welfare benefits due to the reduced level of mortalities and disease suffered by the trout populations.



Patrick Smith of Schering-Plough Aquaculture presenting

Future events

Over the next few months, the Aquainnovation project will be organising or participating in the following events:

- *February 10-14, 2006:* Fish International 2006, Bremen, Germany. Aquainnovation partner Eurofish will be organising the "Trade Point" where representatives of Central and Eastern European countries can meet and talk with present and new business partners.
- *April 3-5, 2006:* Study visit to Germany (see overleaf)

- *May 9-13, 2006:* Aqua 2006, Florence, Italy. Organised by Aquainnovation partner EAS in partnership with the World Aquaculture Society, with conference, workshops and exhibition. Meet Aquainnovation partners in the trade show and hear related presentations in the conference sessions.
- *May 17-19, 2006:* Aquaculture International 2006, Glasgow, UK Aquainnovation will be represented in this exhibition by the University of Stirling

Further details about these events, are available via the project web site.

"The project is encouraging innovation through sharing knowledge, ideas and experiences"

Photography Competition!

The Aquaculture Innovation photo competition has attracted a lot of attention and amateur photographers across Europe with an interest in aquaculture are busy capturing those special shots. Photographs will be judged in 4 categories— "Aquaculture innovation"; "Aquaculture and nature"; "Aquaculture people" and "Aquaculture produce". Photographs can be

uploaded directly to the web site, or can be sent to the coordinator by post. Details of the prizes and associated rules are on the project web site at <http://www.aquainnovation.net/aquainnovation/photocomp/>. The deadline for entries is **31st March 2006**, so if you have not already done so, get your camera out and let your imagination inspire some great shots!



Star prize is this Olympus SP-500 Ultrazoom digital camera



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Partner focus

AKVAPARK ASSOCIATION, Hungary:

The establishment of this new type of non-governmental organisation was initiated by the Research Institute for Fisheries Aquaculture and Irrigation (HAKI) at Szarvas, which became an internationally acknowledged centre of excellence in aquaculture research, development and training. The political and economic changes offered a good environment for restructuring, where the pain of reducing staff numbers from 250 to 62 was alleviated by creating "satellite" companies taking over the more directly business-connected tasks of the institute and absorbing large part of the dismissed personnel. The Fish Culture Research Institute and the newly formed small-size private enterprises decided the establishment of the AKVAPARK Association in 1996. Its main objective is to coordinate the operation and development of the unique complex of the available aquaculture, and aquaculture-related facilities, to make joint efforts to implement R&D, extension and training programs, and to maintain traditional professional and human relationships among the members.



Event focus—Study visit to Germany, 3-5 April 2006



Aquaculture Innovation Network partner Aquacultur Fischtechnik GmbH is hosting a study tour to Germany that will be of particular interest to fish farmers, aquaculture college tutors, aquaculture product buyers and exporters seeking to learn from German experiences and make contacts in new markets.

Participating in this event will provide outstanding opportunities to see and discuss new technologies and how freshwater aquaculture can adapt to the changing European market place. The visit will provide a focus on innovation and how you can take advantage of new technologies and market opportunities and make new contacts to advance your business. Included in the itinerary are visits to a recirculated catfish farm, a partially-recirculated trout

farm, a carp farm and a pilot recirculated striped bass system. New technologies will be on display by supply companies Aquacultur and Sander, and current research examined at the Gross Glienicke Freshwater Institute near Berlin.



Further information, including details of financial support available, is available from the Aquainnovation web site or the address at the top of this page.

Partially recirculated trout farm included in the tour

This project is financially supported by the Commission of the European Communities

