



Photo courtesy of the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans

With the wild harvest of the world's fish stocks having reached its peak, it will be necessary for aquaculture production across the globe to double by the year 2010. New Brunswick intends to be a major player in meeting this demand.

Leaders of innovation in thriving industry

■ **By Stephen Clare**

Atlantic Canada's dynamic aquaculture industry is positioning itself for more growth in the coming years, and many in the sector believe that New Brunswick will be at the forefront of future developments.

"We are already world leaders in almost every aspect of the aquaculture industry," says Jamey Smith, executive director of the New Brunswick Salmon Growers' Association. "The potential for us to become major players in the world's marketplace over the next decade is enormous."

And with news that the wild harvest of the world's fish stocks has peaked, it is now estimated that existing levels of seafood consumption will necessitate a doubling of the world's aquaculture

production by the year 2010.

"New Brunswick is firmly positioned not only to provide the necessary technical and educational support to the global community to enable aquaculture to realize its full potential, but also to have our products make an even bigger name for themselves in the world's markets," says Smith.

To that end, companies like Cooke Aquaculture of Black's Harbour are aggressively developing strategies that will afford it greater opportunities in the global economy.

"We are exploring markets outside of Canada and the U.S.," says Nell Hulse, the company's vice-president of communications. "And we currently have a number of initiatives underway that will increase our prospects in our already existing markets, including: the creation of healthy, alternative

convenience foods; the development of value-added seafood products; the creation of a detailed educational program for point-of-purchase consumers."

Cooke Aquaculture recently received accredited certification of its Freshwater Division for the Seafood Trust - Certified Quality Salmon - Eco-Label. This is the world's first international aquaculture certification program designed "to identify premium environmentally managed products and to assist the international aquaculture industry in demonstrating and proving its commitment to environmentally sustainable development, low impact farming and conservation when producing and processing seafood".

Continued on page 9

True leaders of innovation

Continued from page 8

“We are extremely proud of this achievement,” says Hulse. “Hopefully we can continue to serve as an example for other businesses in our sector, both across the region and around the world.”

Hulse adds that along with the public’s growing demand for the aquaculture industry to leave a smaller ecological footprint, the call for better and safer foods on the shelves presents an ongoing challenge for companies like Cooke Aquaculture.

“Ultimately, the successful marketing of aquaculture products depends on consumer confidence in product safety and quality,” she says. “Thankfully, New Brunswick has one of the greatest R&D facilities in the world supporting the private sector.”

Hulse is referring to the province’s Research and Productivity Council (RPC) in Fredericton which was designed to serve the needs of the aquaculture industry in the province. Rachael Ritchie, head of the Food, Fisheries & Aquaculture Department for RPC, says that her organization has been working with businesses across the region for almost 20 years.

“During that time we have provided an ever-increasing number and variety of services with the goal of preventing, detecting or solving fish health problems in salmon, haddock, hal-

ibut, cod and other species,” says Ritchie. “Some fish health services include: on-site sampling, fish health diagnostics, pathogen characterization, vaccine development and testing, and fish health research and development.”

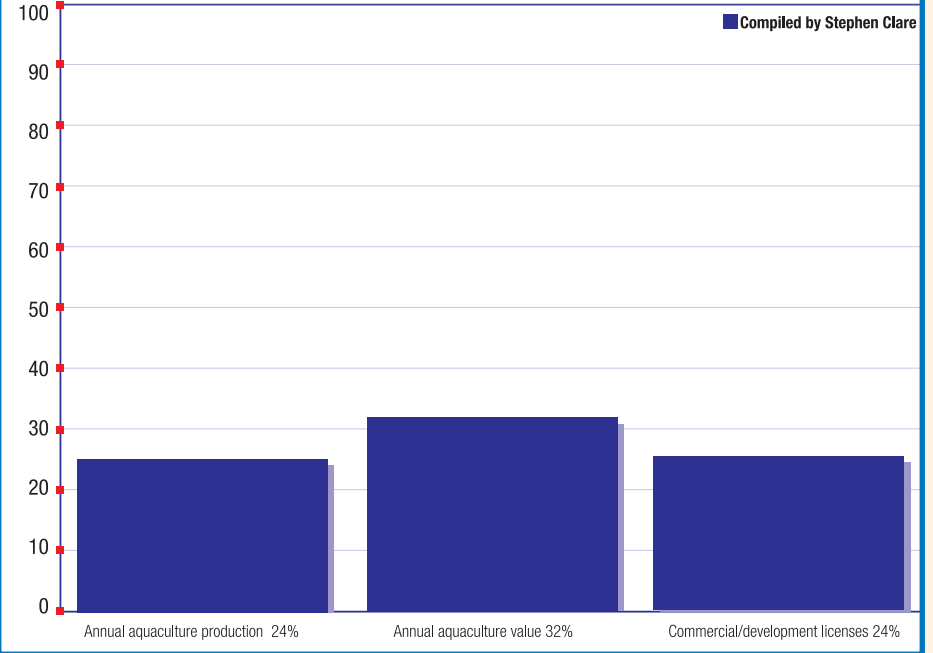
If we are going to stay competitive in the new global marketplace, it is essential that we continue to invest in and support our capacities to stay on the leading edge of research and development in the aquaculture industry, says Ritchie.

That mandate to bring a better product to world markets was recently on display at last month’s International Boston Seafood Show, where both public and private sector leaders were on hand to unveil New Brunswick’s new marketing strategy.

“Our slogan, 'New Brunswick Seafood: What a Catch!', and our new logo will become easily identifiable around the world,” premier Shawn Graham told the crowd of international buyers from across the globe representing: restaurants, hotels, resorts, institutions, seafood markets and supermarkets, distributors, wholesalers, processors, importers, exporters, brokers and traders.

“New Brunswick is synonymous with freshness and excellence,” he added, “and we believe our new materials can better convey that message to the world. This is another step

New Brunswick’s National Share



in our efforts to build an industry that is strong and self-sufficient.”

Ronald Ouellette, New Brunswick’s Minister of Agriculture and Aquaculture, said that more efforts to bring New Brunswick seafood to global markets will follow.

“This new look is just the beginning of our efforts to highlight the industries,” he said. “In

the coming months we will outline further marketing support for our provincial companies. The exhibitors at the New Brunswick pavilion have already received great feedback from the buyers, brokers and traders. It was encouraging to see new business opportunities developing at the show, and I am confident they will garner sales for our province.”