

Whitefish

Oz company receives boost

Mainstream Aquaculture gets a \$1.6 million development grant to farm barramundi

IntraFish.com

Australian barramundi fish farming company Mainstream Aquaculture, as part of a nationwide business commercialization strategy, has received a AUD 1.7 million (\$1.6 million/€1.2 million) grant from the Australian federal government.

The cornerstone of the company's program is a barramundi hatchery designed for year round spawning, domestication and selective breeding, which will have a commercial output of more than 20 million weaned fingerlings annually.

"Our aim is to commercialize controlled spawning and stock domestication technology that has been developed over the past decade through Mainstream's on-going R&D program," said Paul Harrison, head of aquaculture for the Oz company. "This new facility will enable the commercialization of novel technology and provide a resource to further expand R&D in this exciting area."

Approximately two-thirds of barramundi consumed in Australia currently is imported, the vast majority from Asia, explained the Australian Minister for Climate Change, Industry and Innovation Greg Combet.

"This technology presents a viable and environmentally-friendly opportunity to grow superior quality, sustainable, domestic barramundi on a cost-



BARRAMUNDI: Mainstream staff check the state of one of the company's broodstock.

competitive basis," Combet said.

Signaling the importance the Australian federal government places on food security, Prime Minister Julia Gillard, said, "It's great to see a local company working in partnership with the

government to bring an innovative idea like this into the marketplace."

"The grant will help Mainstream Aquaculture to develop a new state of the art facility and produce a commercial volume of barramundi on a continuous

basis," added the fish farming company's Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Boris Musa. "It will also bring ancillary benefits to the scientific community and educational providers, as well as generate new manufacturing and

research jobs. We are delighted the value of our research and development program has been recognized at the most senior levels in government and look forward to commercializing our unique food production technology."