



## Salmon aquaculture solutions

While the salmon farming industry creates many problems in BC it also provides employment for people in coastal communities. To maintain these jobs while still protecting the health of the marine ecosystem and wild salmon, the solution is to move the farms out of the water and into closed containment.

Closed containment systems involve a barrier between wild and farmed salmon, thereby eliminating many of the most negative impacts of open-net cage salmon farming and significantly reducing others. This solution allows a commercial-scale salmon farming industry to continue in a more sustainable manner, without jeopardizing wild Pacific salmon or BC's marine ecosystem.

The open net-cage industry has been resistant to change, claiming that closed containment technology is too costly to develop. However, in the past few years, some progress has been made. BC-based Agrimarine Holdings Inc. has developed closed containment projects in both BC and China. During the summer of 2009, Agrimarine began the installation of ten 24-foot diameter tanks that will each grow 50,000 steelhead trout to market size within 12 months in northeast China. They are working on the development of closed containment facilities to raise farmed salmon in the Tiedong District as well.

The largest salmon farming company in the world, Marine Harvest, is also showing interest in closed containment technology. In December 2009, Marine Harvest Canada (MHC) revealed to local media that their company has internal plans for developing a new land-based closed containment facility. The work plan for the project is expected to be complete by the end of March 2010, at which point MHC will make

a public announcement of the project proposal.

Sustainable seafood programs are also part of the solution. Until industry cleans up its act, consumers can make use of programs like SeaChoice ([www.SeaChoice.org](http://www.SeaChoice.org)) that provide Canadians, including businesses, with the information they need to make environmentally responsible seafood choices. In the US, the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program ([www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp](http://www.mbayaq.org/cr/seafoodwatch.asp)) has been internationally acclaimed for its success in promoting sustainable seafood.

The grocery sector and the restaurant industry have also been making a critical contribution towards resolving the environmental and social threats presented by the open net-cage salmon farming industry. By declining to sell farmed salmon produced in open net-cages, by choosing to sell and serve only environmentally responsible seafood products and by requesting such products from their suppliers, progressive companies are making unsustainable practices bad for business.

Until closed containment systems are commonplace in BC's salmon farming industry, interim measures are needed to protect struggling wild salmon stocks and the marine ecosystem from the impacts of net-cages. Reducing sea lice numbers on farmed salmon and creating safer migratory routes to improve the chances of survival of wild juvenile salmon is a top priority.

CAAR works actively, through ongoing dialogue with industry leader Marine Harvest Canada and all levels government, to help foster these changes in practices.

## wild salmon the foundation of coastal life

Formed in 2001, the *Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR)* is a coalition of five member groups working to ensure salmon farming in British Columbia is safe for wild salmon, marine ecosystems, coastal communities and human health.

Members:

[David Suzuki Foundation](#)

[Georgia Strait Alliance](#)

[Living Oceans Society](#)

[T. Buck Suzuki Foundation](#)

[Watershed Watch Salmon Society](#)

[www.farmedanddangerous.org](http://www.farmedanddangerous.org)

