

Dutchboy Farms

WHAT WAS AN OCCASIONAL IMPORTATION TO SUPPLY OUR OWN MODEST LITTLE FARM HAS GROWN INTO A SEPARATE FACILITY THAT SUPPLIES NEARLY 5 MILLION TILAPIA FINGERLINGS ANNUALLY AROUND THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT.

Company Spotlight

HEALTH & GENETICS DRAW CUSTOMERS TO DUTCHBOY FARMS

There's 1,000 gallons per minute of 83 degree water flowing from a spring in the Caribou Mountains of Southern Idaho, from an aquifer estimated to be 7,000 feet deep. For someone already making a living raising fish, it was not much of a decision to build a tilapia farm there. John Lambregts came to the US in 1987, and earned a M.S. in Agricultural Economics from Texas A&M in 1992. By 2000, he had more than 10 years experience raising and marketing fish in Idaho and Texas, and developing this spring was the next logical step. He built a small, six raceway, grow-out farm.

One of the biggest struggles on the new farm was disease control. In the last decade, and even today, many tilapia farms were struggling with several species of streptococcus as well as a variety of opportunistic aeromonas / pseudomonas species. All of the commercially available fingerlings were susceptible to one or more of these disease agents, and many farms weren't able to overcome the associated problems, even with vaccination programs.

Another approach was needed. When vaccines didn't work, John went on a search for a strain of tilapia that had natural resistance to the endemic



diseases. In 2006, the company took a chance and imported the first batch of fish from Nam Sai Farms in Thailand. Owner Warren Turner has been selecting disease resistant tilapia for his breeding programs, and these fish turn out to have excellent resistance to the strain of streptococcus in Idaho. As a matter of fact, within a year of switching to the Nam Sai stock, the farm

tested negative for streptococcus, and has tested negative on the bi-annual health tests ever since.

It wasn't long before other farms asked if we would import fingerlings for them as well. Of course, once we started offering fingerlings to our colleagues in the region, we started getting unsolicited inquiries from as far away as Maine. The world did beat a path to

Water

The spring water supplying the Dutchboy Farms hatchery comes from the geologically active Caribou range in South East Idaho. Only 230 miles from Yellowstone National Park, and fed by the same "hot spot", the water is filtered through 7,000 ft of limestone rock structure and returns to the surface as pure, clean, hard spring water, ideal for fish like tilapia.

People

Dutchboy Farms is operated by John Lambregts. Richard Ambrosek (M.S. in Animal Science) manages the warm water facility and the cold water (trout) facilities are managed by John's son, Anthony Lambregts. Anthony is developing a cold water hatchery to increase the selection the company has to offer.

Genetics

"Working with Warren Turner at Nam Sai Farms has been a pleasure. Warren has always listened to our comments and feedback, and we can track the improvements in our production numbers over the years. 10 years ago, it was not uncommon for farms to need 10 to 12 months to bring a tilapia to market size. Now, we do it in 6 to 7 months. Some of the improvement can be attributed to better feed, but the primary factor is much better genetics."

our doorstep in the Idaho mountains! What was an occasional importation to supply our own modest little farm has grown into a separate facility that supplies nearly 5 million tilapia fingerlings around the North American continent.

Given our own experience, disease control is critically important, and the entire fingerling program is built around our bio security protocol. One key is that the spring water

that supplies the farm is sterile (due to extremely high levels of nitrogen gas and CO2), so there is no possibility of external disease introduction. Another is that the hatchery building is disinfected and dried up every five weeks. Before a new batch is taken into the hatchery building, the water supply is shut down, the entire building and all troughs are flooded with disinfectant and then heated and dried out for several days. The next batch is

then brought into the facility and kept in isolation for 4 to 5 weeks. This way, there is no vertical transmission between groups of fish, and if there ever is an introduction of disease, it will be stopped.

Still, John reminds us, disease control is great, but disease RESISTANCE is the real key to success. Even farms with the best bio-security protocols can get breached, and then the disease resistance of the fish can save a farm. It is all about risk management.

Our job is to find the best genetic stock, no matter where on earth, and make it available to small and large producers alike. Just like with the tilapia fingerlings, once we started experimenting with barramundi and pangasius catfish from various sources, customers started coming to us for fingerlings. After a few years of experimenting with stock from several suppliers, we now have established programs with two of the best hatcheries in the world, and are supplying fingerlings to a number of grow-out farms. **am**

Dutchboy Farms

The best genetics from around the world!

Tilapia, pangasius & barramundi fry and fingerlings

Proven disease resistant genetics

10 years experience in global shipping

Licensed, bonded & clearances with FDA, USDA, USF&W and most states & provinces

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