

Trends in the European aquaculture products supply: status for new aquaculture species

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Species diversification

The companies look for species that can be reared in their geographic area and, if possible, using their existing resources.

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Real options

Atlantic cod (*Gadus morhua*)

- > Pros
 - High SGR
 - Low FCR
 - Big Market
 - Use of salmon technology
 - Different presentations
- > Cons
 - Early puberty
 - Diseases
 - Larval rearing technology

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The beginning of this century is characterized by a species diversification ‘fever’ within the aquaculture industry. The recent developments in the marine hatchery technologies of the last 10 years, make it possible now to produce a big number of good quality fish fry of many different fish species.

The finfish aquaculture in Europe is dominated by Atlantic salmon (750,000 Tn), rainbow trout (338,000 Tn), gilthead seabream (99,000 Tn), seabass (82,000 Tn) and common carp (68,000 Tn), within the species reared at an industrial scale. Bluefin tuna, catfish species, European eel, turbot, Atlantic cod, silver carp, arctic char, sharpshout seabream, grass carp, halibut, sturgeon species, grey mullet and tench complete this group. Some other species as whitefish, brown trout and pike was also reared industrially, but mainly for restocking or recreational purposes.

Another group of new species are being cultured in pilot scale farms or in small productions. Some of these species include meagre, Senegalese sole, Dover sole, axillary bream, red porgy, white seabream, common pandora, blackspot seabream, saithe, pollack, haddock, spotted wolfish, tilapia and barramundi.

Lately, there is a group of fish species that are still at R&D level, like common dentex, redbanded seabream, greater amberjack, scorpionfish, wedge sole, brill, stripped seabream, European hake, red mullet, dusky grouper and wreckfish.

Cod, meagre and senegalese sole seem to be the three ‘real options’ for industrial production in a short term period, although early puberty in cod, market expansion in meagre and health management in sole are very important issues still under development.

There are 51 fish species already being farmed or on the way to be farmed in Europe. However, only 5 of these species (Atlantic salmon, rainbow trout, seabass, seabream and common carp), account for more than 95% of all the European finfish aquaculture production. This means that, although there is a lot of activity going on around the development of new species for the European aquaculture, the ‘effective’ diversification is extremely low up to now, resulting in that Atlantic salmon dominates the production with more than 55%.

In conclusion, although there is a huge potential for diversification in the European aquaculture, a joint national and international effort of all the partners involved, (private investors research bodies and authorities) is necessary to avoid duplicities and inadequate expenditures of time and resources, and to shorten the time to market of these new promising new species.