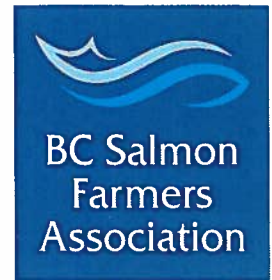


BCSFA STATEMENT REGARDING AVAILABILITY OF SAMPLES FROM BC SALMON FARMS

Dec. 15, 2011



Some of the testimony given by Dr. Kristi Miller at the Cohen Commission of Inquiry has caused some confusion about sampling that's been done for Infectious Salmon Anemia on BC's salmon farms.

The BC Salmon Farmers Association would like to clarify the availability of samples from our farms.

Infectious Salmon Anemia.

The BCSFA has volunteered samples from every salmon farm in BC to the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and Department of Fisheries and Oceans –the lead authorities on the ISA investigation.

BC's salmon farmers have participated in a sampling program through our regulators for nearly 10 years. As part of the CFIA investigation into reports of preliminary and unconfirmed ISA findings, the sampling program that has been undertaken by government and industry was deemed extensive enough to offer confidence in the consistently negative findings.

That sampling continues. The BCSFA will of course also abide by any new surveillance plan implemented by the CFIA.

No requests for samples for ISA testing have ever been denied.

Research by Dr. Kristi Miller

Discussions with Dr. Miller in the fall showed that research into the parvovirus is still at a preliminary stage with no indication yet about whether it causes disease or how long it has been found in British Columbia. During those meetings, Dr. Miller advised industry representatives that she had access to historical wild samples of salmon as well as audit samples collected regularly from farms (now reaching 7,000).

Industry proposed a stepped approach, which would begin testing the already-available samples of both wild and farmed salmon while conducting virology work to test the virus for disease indicators. When or if a disease is found, then a sampling program would be implemented in the spring for both hatchery and early-entry farmed salmon to mirror the sampling program for wild salmon.

Dr. Miller refused that proposal. Therefore, no application for funding could be made in time for the deadline. The BCSFA has expressed its continued interest in pursuing a research agreement with DFO regarding this work. There has been no further proposal from Dr. Miller.

There was no refusal of samples. This proposal was made based on the understanding that Dr. Miller had access to already collected samples, and other work needed to be prioritized before further sampling in the spring.

Attached below is a PDF of the email exchange between Dr. Miller and BCSFA Executive Director Mary Ellen Walling regarding this topic, as well as the letter to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans.

Subject: proposal

From: Mary Ellen [<mailto:mwalling@telus.net>]
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2011 5:32 PM
To: 'Miller-Saunders, Kristi'
Cc: 'Johnson, Stewart'; 'Parsons, Jay'; 'Brown, Laura (Pacific)'; 'Richards, Laura'; 'Sheppard, Mark'
Subject: RE: proposal

Hi Kristi, I am sorry that you are not happy about the approach. We were very appreciative of the time you spent walking us through your research and because of the extremely tight timeline and the need to include Dr Garver, we all felt this would be a good first step which provided support for your ongoing research while we built a plan for the second and third phases together. I am away next week, but would be interested in discussing with you about how we could move forward on this.

Mary Ellen

From: Miller-Saunders, Kristi [<mailto:Kristi.Miller@dfo-mpo.gc.ca>]
Sent: Friday, September 30, 2011 5:24 PM
To: Mary Ellen
Cc: Johnson, Stewart; Parsons, Jay; Brown, Laura (Pacific); Richards, Laura; Sheppard, Mark
Subject: RE: proposal

Mary Ellen,

The main purpose of my contacting and meeting with the industry was to obtain samples from industry to test for the parvovirus. As this part of the proposal that I put together has been removed by industry, I see no value in putting this proposal into ACRDP or embarking on a collaboration at this time. The archived sockeye samples are already in my lab, and will eventually be analysed. I don't need industry to do this. I will go ahead with the analysis of the Audit samples and decide how to move forward in the new year.

Kristi Miller

Head, Molecular Genetics Section
Pacific Biological Station
Nanaimo, BC
phone (250) 756-7155
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Please Note new email address effective Jan 2008:
Kristi.Miller@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

From: Mary Ellen [<mailto:mwalling@telus.net>]
Sent: September 30, 2011 4:51 PM
To: Miller-Saunders, Kristi
Cc: Johnson, Stewart; Parsons, Jay; Brown, Laura (Pacific)
Subject: proposal
Importance: High

Kristi –please take a quick look and let me know if this will work for you –and also that the budget is okay. I am copying Laura and Stewart to keep them in the loop and also because the timeline is so tight.

Due to the short time notice and the inability to confirm Dr. Garver's participation we are not in position to support the full ACRDP project for today's deadlines; however we would like to propose a phased approach. We see this work unfolding in several stages. Dr. Miller is presently broadening the epidemiological surveys of this viral strain (sequence) to identify the range of species potentially affected (at this point, focusing on the presence or absence of the parvoviral sequence rather than indices of disease, per se) and to determine how many years the salmon parvovirus may have been present on the BC coast.

Phase One

As a first step we propose that it is critical to analyze archival DNA samples from adult livers from Fraser River sockeye salmon stocks collected between 1983-1995 to determine the temporal distribution.

Phase Two

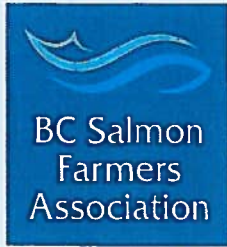
Once this work is completed phase two would see work to determine whether the virus is pathogenic and can be transmitted to other fish. This work to be done by Dr Garver. The main focus of that phase of the work is to determine disease and or mortality in Pacific salmon, primarily sockeye and potentially other species of salmon.

Phase Three

Sample collection and analyses of samples from smolts collected in freshwater hatcheries and post-smolts collected during the first month of marine residence for both farmed fish and enhancement facility fish. It is important to see the populations exposed at the same time so this work is expected to be underway in early spring 2012. DFO will also be analyzing industry samples obtained through the Audit program in 2011 with funds from DFO-SAFE Division.

Thanks to Dr Miller for her assistance in pulling this important project together.

Mary Ellen



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November 25, 2011

Honourable Keith Ashfield
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Dear Minister Ashfield,

It was very nice to see you in Ottawa last week at the Canadian Aquaculture Alliance meetings and reception. The information provided by DFO and CFIA to inform Canadians and our markets about the follow up on the ISA investigation is much appreciated.

As you know approx 5,000 samples of our farmed salmon have been tested for the virus and all have proven to be negative. We are in the process of reviewing our previous test results with CFIA. As well we are cooperating fully with them to provide them with access to our ongoing fish health information and any test results.

As a part of our ongoing due diligence and follow up regarding the ISA testing, we would like to offer that additional samples be taken from every salmon farm in British Columbia to test for the virus. We are in contact with CFIA to arrange for the samples to be taken.

Thanks again for taking the time to meet with us and we look forward to continuing our work to build a sustainable salmon farming business in British Columbia.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mary Ellen Walling".

Mary Ellen Walling
Executive Director

CC: Dr Cornelius Kiley, CFIA
Vincent Erenst, Marine Harvest Canada
Fernando Villarroel, Mainstream Canada
Stewart Hawthorn, Grieg Seafood
Tim Rundle, Creative Salmon