



January 19, 2021

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
Langevin Block  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A2

Dear Prime Minister

Please accept this letter on behalf of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture expressing our concern over your government's recent decision to shut down salmon farming on Discovery Island by 2022.

British Columbia farm-raised salmon is the largest agricultural export for British Columbia. Nearly 6500 families in BC rely on salmon farming for their livelihood.

Despite the importance your government has placed on transparency, consulting with Canadians and making science and evidence-based decisions, the decision to close the salmon farms seems to contradict these principles. This food sector has been the subject of exhaustive reviews and scientific study to determine any impacts on wild salmon populations. The nine peer-reviewed studies recently finalized by the Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) at the request of the Cohen Commission concluded that salmon farms in the Discovery Islands have less than a minimal potential impact on wild salmon. The Cohen Commission's high test was thus met and surpassed by the salmon farms.

Because the farms passed this high bar of performance, the process for renewing federal licenses should have been fair and taken into account this performance, the science, and community impact. Unfortunately, it did not.

This decision affects up to 25% of the salmon production of British Columbia, impacting close to 1500 jobs. The job impact in northern Vancouver Island is very real. There are very few other opportunities in this part of Canada. Once these valuable jobs and infrastructure are removed, they are very difficult to bring back. Markets served by good Canadian product will quickly be filled by other global production at a great loss for global-leading Canadian sustainable production.

We urge the federal government to immediately develop a growth plan for the aquaculture sector, especially for the salmon sector in British Columbia, to enable the sustainable growth of the sector and provide clarity and certainty for investment.

We also ask your government to explicitly identify a federal department to champion the economic growth of the aquaculture sector. DFO's mandate seems to preclude this; Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada should be a better home but would need an expanded mandate.

Your government has recognized the growth potential of Canadian agriculture and the aquaculture sector can and should be a global leader but this decision creates great and unnecessary uncertainty for

the future of this sector. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture stands with our seafood farmers in British Columbia and across Canada.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Robinson".

Mary Robinson  
President

C.C.

Hon. Bernadette Jordan, PC, MP, Minister of Fisheries & Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Hon. Chrystia Freeland, PC, MP, Minister of Finance

Hon. François-Philippe Champagne, PC, MP, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development

Hon. Marie-Claude Bibeau, PC, MP, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Hon. Carolyn Bennett, PC, MP, Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations

Hon. Mary Ng, Minister of Small Business, Export Promotion and International Trade

Terry Beech, MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of DFO

Premiers and Lead Ministers for NL, NS, NB, PEI, QC, ON, BC

Mr. Erin O'Toole, PC, MP, Leader of the Official Opposition

Mr. Richard Bragdon, MP, Critic to the Minister of Fisheries & Oceans

Mr. Pierre Poilievre, MP, Critic to the Minister of Finance

Mr. Jagmeet Singh, Leader of the New Democratic Party