

## Russia to boost domestic aquaculture production

**Plans to establish a new aquaculture hub in the Russian region of Tatarstan have been revealed, as the country aims to compensate for the lack of salmon imports from Norway.**

Russia's state-run Federal Agency for Fishery (Rosrybolovstvo), the authorities of the Republic of Tatarstan and Norwegian fish industry investors have met in Kazan, in western Russia, with the aim to discuss the possibilities of establishing an aquaculture cluster in Tatarstan.

Since Russia imposed a ban on Norwegian food imports, the country's salmon supply has fallen by an estimated 130,000 to 140,000 tonnes per year, according to data released by the Rosrybolovstvo. Under the plan, a string of aquaculture investments in Tatarstan is to be launched in the spring and summer of 2018, which would allow for a significant increase in its domestically produced fish supply.

Although the nature of the species to be farmed, has not yet been finalised at the press conference that accompanied the meeting, Rosrybolovstvo's deputy head Vasily Sokolov said there is a "market niche" in Russia for trout and salmon. Given that Tatarstan is landlocked, any production of the latter would need to be in land-based recirculation systems.

The Norwegian delegation at the event consisted of a number of companies, including Noras Group, AquaOptima AS and Norway Seaweed AS, according to the Rosrybolovstvo's statement.

"In Tatarstan, the concept of the development of the aquaculture industry, coordinated with the Rosrybolovstvo, has been approved. We are now entering its implementation phase, and it is necessary for us to host successful, large-scale projects in the near future," said Ravil Muratov, the First Deputy Prime Minister the Republic of Tatarstan, as quoted in the agency's statement.

The republic's government is planning to provide various means of support to potential Norwegian investors from the aquaculture industry, according to Muratov. These could consist of financial support in the form of subsidies for projects in Tatarstan, as well as the allocation of land plots for investments, the deputy Prime Minister said. In addition to the regional authorities and state institutions, local research and development entities are to be also involved in the cluster's development, the Rosrybolovstvo added.

Located in central western Russia, Tatarstan is part of the Russian Federation, and has a population of close to 4 million.

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