A Q U A G E N E G G U P D A T E
1 / 2010
February

Historically High Egg Quality throughout the Whole Season

Egg quality in the present season promises to be the best in Aqua Gen's history. Through delivery controls and feedback from customers we find that there have never been better egg quality and hatching results recorded since our systematic controls began in 2004.

During the period from week 44, 2009 to week 6, 2010 we have delivered 164 million salmon eggs to the Norwegian market. From this body of eggs 49 delivery controls have been carried out, representing checking of 57 % of the eggs shipped. The total percentage of non-viable eggs averaged 0.52 % of which pin-eyed eggs made up 0.41 %, unfertilized eggs 0.02 %, dead eggs 0.01 % and other discrepancies 0.06 %. The lowest and highest recorded percentages of non-viability were respectively 0 % and 1.8 %.

In the first 30 reports after hatching an average survival to hatch of 98.7 % was reported, at 499 day-degrees with an average hatch window of 3.4 days. To date we have received good feedback from all of those who have carried out start-feeding. Their fry have good appetites and are growing well.

IPN-resistance - Field Trials of QTL-based Selection

Aqua Gen is planning to investigate the performance of eggs that were derived from parents selected on the basis of the gene marker for IPN resistance (QTL-eggs) under commercial hatching conditions.

We will be contacting customers who have purchased QTL-eggs and a corresponding number of customers who have purchased traditional egg products to ask them to participate in a field trial. We wish to collect and compare data on survival, possible disease outbreaks and other factors with relevance for the QTL-based selection. The project period will be from the time of egg intake to 90 days after transfer to the sea. We are also interested in data up to the point of harvest if the customers receiving the smolt are willing to provide that.

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Disinfection of Eggs

Before despatching eggs Aqua Gen disinfects them according to specific procedures set down in our quality-control routines. The main rule is that the eggs are disinfected at the time of packing and sending to the customer according to OIE guidelines. This is a statutory requirement for EU exports, but not for internal "national" eggs. To all of our EU customers eggs are disinfected at packing as standard practice, but for some of our Norwegian customers there has been a request to disinfect at arrival at the hatchery instead of at packing. After reviewing this matter, we have concluded that we will continue to carry out disinfection on packing for all shipments.

For reasons of bio-security it is most efficient and effective to carry out a standardized procedure for all eggs which are produced in, and sent out from, our plants. These procedures are regularly checked by and verified by the regulatory authorities, and through our own internal controls. All of our egg customers are free to review our procedures or to be present at the time of disinfection of their egg delivery.

There is very good documentation that the disinfection of eggs is a most important method of hindering egg-associated infections. So for the security of all of our customers we believe it is most productive and sufficient that we carry out our disinfection at packing.

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