

GM SALMON PRODUCTION STOPPED

The US company AquaBounty has ceased production of genetically modified (GM or genetically engineered) salmon and closed all of its operations.

This was the world's first GM food animal.

Canada was the first country in the world where GM salmon was sold, unlabelled, starting in 2017.

Closed: Bay Fortune, P.E.I., Canada

On December 11, 2024, AquaBounty announced closure of its last operation which was the smaller, long-standing research and development facility in P.E.I. which the company had also said would be used to supply GM salmon eggs to its other farms.

Closed: Rollo Bay, P.E.I, Canada

AquaBounty announced closure of its GM salmon production facility at Rollo Bay in 2023 and is now selling the building. This was the world's first purpose-built GM salmon factory. It was built in 2019 and sold its first GM salmon in 2021.

Closed: Albany, Indiana, US

AquaBounty sold its Indiana facility in 2024 to an aquaculture company that does not use GM fish or GM fish food.

Closing?: Pioneer, Ohio, US

AquaBounty says it is assessing "alternatives" for their not-yet-built Ohio farm. Construction has been on hold since June 2023 and the company has been selling equipment from the site.

The GM Salmon

The Atlantic salmon is genetically engineered (genetically modified) with the claim to grow faster, using a growth hormone gene from Chinook salmon and genetic material from ocean pout. It was the world's first commercialized GM food animal but production has ended.



AquaBounty's GM salmon production facility at Rollo Bay, P.E.I is closed, September 18, 2024. Photo Credit: CBAN.

TIMELINE

2010: Groups in Prince Edward Island denounced plans for GE salmon egg production.

2013: The Minister of the Environment and Climate Change Canada approved commercial production of GM salmon and salmon eggs, in land-based facilities.

2014: The Government of Panama fined AquaBounty for violating environmental regulations at their GM salmon pilot plant.

2016: Health Canada approved the GM salmon for human consumption.

2016: The Federal Court of Canada ruled that the Environment Minister's 2013 decision only applies to AquaBounty's Bay Fortune, P.E.I. facility, triggering a new risk assessment for AquaBounty's planned Rollo Bay facility in P.E.I.

2017: The world's first GM salmon was sold, unlabelled, in Canada (produced in Panama).

2017: The Government of Prince Edward Island approved construction of AquaBounty's first purpose-built on-land GM salmon "tank farm," at Rollo Bay.

2019: AquaBounty closed its pilot plant in Panama.

2019: The Minister of Environment and Climate Change Canada approved production of GM salmon at AquaBounty's facility at Rollo Bay.

2020: Large grocery chains in Canada reported they are not selling the GM salmon.

2021: AquaBounty "harvested" its first GM salmon produced in Canada.

2022: Ontario/Quebec grocery chain METRO committed to not sell the GM salmon.

2022: The Nasdaq Capital Market threatened to delist AquaBounty if it did not raise its share price above USD \$1.

2023: AquaBounty announced it will no longer produce GM salmon at Rollo Bay, P.E.I.

2023: AquaBounty paused construction of its new facility in Pioneer, Ohio.

2024: AquaBounty closed and sold its Indiana facility.

2024: AquaBounty announced the sale of its facility in Rollo Bay, P.E.I.

2024: (December) AquaBounty announced it is stopping GM fish production and selling its last operation (Bay Fortune, P.E.I.).

TIMELINE of Government Funding to AquaBounty

AquaBounty has benefited from at least five federal government loans, one federal government grant, and two provincial government loans.

- Between 2002 and 2017, the Government of P.E.I. provided **\$818,000 in non-repayable support** to AquaBounty including grants and labour incentives.
- By March 2018, public funds of at least **\$8.2 million** had been invested in the development of the GM salmon.

Federal and provincial government grants and loans to AquaBounty include the following:

1999: AquaBounty Canada got an interest-free loan of just under **\$3 million** from the federal government's Technology Partnerships Canada with repayment to take the form of a small royalty on company revenues. (The financing was never repaid, because in 2014, the year the term of the agreement expired, AquaBounty had not generated any revenues from its fish.)

2009: The federal government's Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) provided \$2.87 million to AquaBounty to support research. This agreement provided for a 10% royalty from product sales to the federal government.

2016: ACOA gave the company an unconditionally repayable fund of \$337,000 to develop its hatchery.

2016: The Island Investment Development Inc. approved a P.E.I. government loan of \$717,000.

2018: The Government of Prince Edward Island provided a \$2.2 million loan to help AquaBounty finish construction of its GM fish factory at Rollo Bay.

2023: (December): AquaBounty Canada Inc. got a loan from ACOA of up to \$612,000 to support business productivity and scale-up for its Rollo Bay farm.

2024: (February): AquaBounty Canada Inc. borrowed \$158,246 from ACOA.

2024: (November) Federal and P.E.I governments announce \$231,095 for AquaBounty.

For more information and details: www.cban.ca/fish

The **Canadian Biotechnology Action Network (CBAN)** brings together 15 groups to research, monitor and raise awareness about issues relating to genetic engineering in food and farming. CBAN members include farmer associations, environmental and social justice organizations, and regional coalitions of grassroots groups. CBAN is a project on MakeWay's shared platform.



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