

Vg1 Naturbruk, Vg2 Akvakulturfaget, Vg2 Fiske og Fangst

## The Fish Farm

**Bente is an apprentice at a local salmon fish farm. One of her tasks is to show foreign business associates and customers around the plant. She has been asked to emphasize the measures for quality control of the salmon in the cages, and that the plant is careful not to upset the local ecological balance.**

**Bente:** How do you do (*shaking hands*). My name is Bente Hagen, and I have been asked to give you a tour of our fish farm and answer any questions you might have.

**Mr. Harris:** How do you do.

**Mr. Baluska:** How do you do.

**Bente:** You have been our customers for two years now, and I am glad to hear that you are very satisfied with the quality of the fish. Would you like to see the cages and hear about our quality control measures which ensure the best possible salmon to our customers?

**Mr. Harris:** Yes, please. It will give us a better understanding of the whole process of producing high quality salmon for export.

**Mr. Baluska:** What a beautiful area this is! It seems like an ideal place for a fish farm.

**Bente:** Yes. We are lucky in Norway to have a coastline where the numerous fiords are deep enough, and have clean water with a temperature which is rarely too warm or too cold, and which is continuously being changed out. Waste products are therefore removed efficiently and a sufficient supply of oxygen for the fish is maintained. Let's walk down to the dock.

*(footsteps on path)*

**Mr. Baluska:** I see that the cages are well-spaced. That must also be important to ensure healthy fish?

**Bente:** Yes, indeed. Each of these cages, which are about 25m in diameter and about 50m deep, contain something like 200,000 salmon. Fish in that kind of concentration create a challenge for the farm to maintain unstressed, healthy, happy fish. You are familiar with our happy fish trademark? That's the kind of fish we try to make sure we have here in these cages.

**Mr. Harris:** Do you have to take other measures to keep the fish healthy? We often hear about salmon lice and the problems they cause both for farmed and wild salmon.

**Bente:** All our juvenile salmon, or smolt as they are called, are vaccinated against various diseases and parasites when they are put into the cages. They are about 1-2 years old then. This will not completely eliminate the possibility of salmon lice, but with our favourable position here in Skillingfjord and close monitoring of the fish we keep it under control. Would you like take a short boat trip to see the cages at close hand?

**Mr. Baluska:** Yes, please!

**Mr. Harris:** That would be very interesting.

**Bente:** Ok. Step carefully. These steps can be slippery. You should wear these lifejackets. It is not a general requirement in Norway, but it is mandatory here at the farm. The sea is quite calm today, but though the shape of the fjord protects us from bad weather the water can also be choppy in here.

*(steps, rustling sounds, boat motor sound which then cuts out)*

**Mr. Harris:** Do you have problems with fish escaping from the cages?

**Bente:** We have had one or two incidents, in connection with transferring the fish from the cage to the boat which takes them to the processing plant. One has to take care that the cage is not tipped over too far, and sometimes waves can cause the propeller of the boat to cut the cage nets.

We are very aware of the potential problems for the local environment and endeavor to make sure that our fish do not escape or in other ways spread disease or disturb the ecology. That is a first priority for the aquaculture industry and the local fishermen in this area.

**Mr. Baluska:** Proper feeding is also important for the health and the final quality of the salmon.

**Bente:** Yes, indeed. The salmon are fed on pellets made of fish and vegetable oils, with vitamins, minerals and mineral acids added. There is a lot of research on the best ingredients for salmon feed and on efficient feeding. We follow new developments carefully to ensure that our salmon get the best.

The salmon are fed automatically from machines which blow the pellets into the cages and we follow the feeding with underwater cameras. If we wait for five minutes you can see the feeding. It is quite a sight.

*(5 minutes later, noise of water splashing)*

**Mr. Harris:** Look at that! The water is boiling!

**Mr. Baluska:** Those fish are certainly hungry!

**Bente:** I guess feeding times are the high points of their day. .... I hope the tour has given you a good insight into the salmon farming here. Do you have any other questions?

**Mr. Harris:** I think you have covered everything. It has been very interesting and we look forward to continuing to supply our customers with happy Norwegian salmon from your farm.