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Aquafeeds

BioMar adopts microalgae into aquafeed, hits 'major sustainability milestone'

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

BioMar becomes the first aquaculture feed company to reach 1 million metric tons of aquafeed containing microalgae

BioMar, a leading supplier of high-performance feed to the aquaculture industry, hit a “major sustainability milestone” by selling 1 million metric tons of salmon feed containing microalgae rather than fish oil.

The company claims it's the first to do so and, given that marine ingredients are a finite resource, it's a significant step towards relieving the pressure on fish stocks.

“By including microalgae in aquaculture feed diets, we can bypass the wild fish stocks and go straight to the original source of essential omega-3s,” said Vidar Gundersen, global sustainability director at BioMar Group. “This helps to relieve pressure on our oceans while ensuring that the fish are getting the optimal nutrition required.”

The innovation process originates back to 2013, with the first microalgae product, **AlgaPrime**



Aquafeed supplier BioMar hit a sustainability goal by reaching 1 million metric tons of salmon feed containing microalgae. Image from the BioMar 2020 Sustainability Report.

(<https://www.globalseafood.org/advocate/aquafeed-ingredient-algaprime-wins-gaa-innovation-award/>), in commercial salmon feeds realized in 2016. The first movers were Kvarøy Fiskeoppdrett with Blue Circle and Whole Foods and Scottish Sea Farms with Marks & Spencer. Subsequently, Ventisqueros in their coho Silverside and Lerøy in their salmon adopted microalgae in their diets. These higher volumes help it achieve commercial viability, and today, the inclusion of microalgae is becoming more common in BioMar salmon feeds.

“To bring something this novel to market required the support from the entire value chain,” said Paddy Campbell, VP of BioMar Group’s salmon division. “We found this among several salmon farmers and retailers that were willing to take a chance on microalgae and today’s success is owed to them all. Also, to the numerous people in BioMar production sites that found solutions to some challenging technical issues that we experienced over the years.”



Pond-cultivated algae: Slimy superhero for aquafeeds?

Qualitas Health, which grows algae in ponds in New Mexico and Texas for human supplements, is entering the alternative aquafeed ingredient market.



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Microalgae is one of several novel ingredients coming down BioMar's innovation pipeline. The company announced an ambitious target of 50 percent circular and/or restorative ingredients in their aquaculture feed diets by 2030. As outlined in [BioMar's 2020 Sustainability Report](https://www.biomar.com/en/global/sustainability/sustainability-report/#refid-42298) (<https://www.biomar.com/en/global/sustainability/sustainability-report/#refid-42298>), the benchmark aligns with the company's goal to address the challenge of limited planetary resources and a growing need to "decouple aquaculture feed supply chains from directly competing with food for human consumption."

BioMar continues to explore innovations for securing raw material flexibility and low-impact feed solutions. Several trials are underway at various BioMar Aquaculture Technology Centres, which will offer valuable insights to help advance sustainability within the aquaculture industry.

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