



## Fish health

The health of aquatic animals must be considered as a state of physical well-being. Disease is not caused simply by the presence of a pathogenic disease organism but more by a complex interaction between the aquatic animal, the environmental conditions and the disease organism (pathogen).

### Health management programs

Health management programs are being used in aquaculture industries throughout the world to maximise the health of the farmed fish stock and ensure that a healthy clean product is reared in optimum environmental conditions.

Health management programs can provide a number of benefits to the industry and individual producers. Some of the potential benefits programs are:

- to minimise risks from disease,
- to demonstrate to potential markets, investors and insurers that a quality assurance program is in place,
- to allow certification of broodstock, seed and/or growout stock as free of specific diseases allowing improved access to local and external markets,
- to satisfy reporting requirements to commonwealth and international agencies that depend on this data to allow continued access to interstate and international markets,
- to alert industry to the introduction of new and exotic diseases and prevent the spread of any exotic or endemic diseases, and
- further enhance the public perception of the industry as being proactive in the area of environmental awareness.

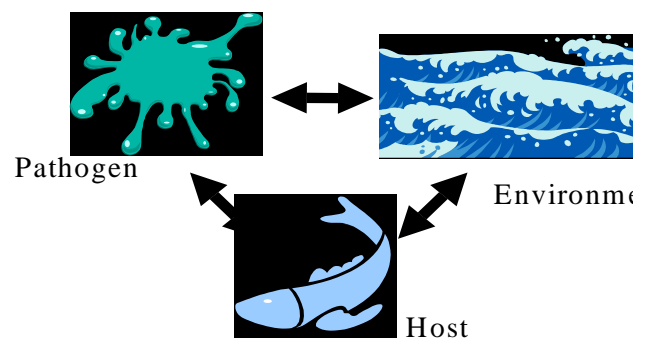
The Fish Health Program is developing health management programs for aquaculture industry groups and individual growers. If you are interested in developing fish health management programs for your industry group or individual enterprise contact Aquaculture SA.

### Diagnostic testing

Veterinary Pathology Services (VPS) is the only veterinary diagnostic laboratory situated in South Australia offering comprehensive diagnostic services to the aquaculture, fishing and aquarium industries.

VPS contact details are:  
PO Box 445  
Glenside SA 5065

Telephone (08) 8372 3700  
Facsimile (08) 8372 3777



## Aquatic animal movements

Historically the translocation of aquatic animals has resulted in significant economic benefits and in certain cases significant environmental damage.

The Australian Atlantic salmon, *Salmo salar*, aquaculture industry is based exclusively on a species originally translocated from the northern hemisphere. The industry brought in income of over \$60 million to Australia in 1997-98, much of it export income. There have been no significant environmental consequences resulting from the introduction of Atlantic salmon to Australia.

There are however instances in which introduction of non-native species has resulted in severe impacts on the local ecology without providing any significant economic benefit. The European carp, *Cyprinus carpio*, is one such example. From a disease perspective, carp are believed to be the source of introduction of the anchor worm, *Lernaea cyprinacea*. The parasite can infect native fish in large numbers and in severe cases can be fatal.

A formal protocol for the translocation of barramundi, *Lates calcarifer*, into South Australia has been principally developed in response to the threat of introduction of the barramundi nodavirus with imported barramundi.

A formal protocol for the translocation of Pacific oysters, *Crassostrea gigas*, from Tasmania is in the final processes of development. The protocol was developed in consultation with the South Australian Oyster Growers Association as a reaction to the threat of several diseases and fouling organisms found in Tasmanian oysters that are exotic to South Australian waters.

## Fish kills and emergency disease incidents

The Fish Health program is developing emergency disease management plans for the fishing and aquaculture industry. If you want to know more about these plans please contact the Aquaculture SA.

If you suspect a fish kill has occurred contact the Fishwatch freecall number 1800 065 522, 24 hours a day.

If you suspect an exotic or notifiable disease in wild or cultured fish stocks contact the Disease Watch Hotline on 1800 675 888.



## Fish health policy review

We are currently in the process of review fish health policy so that we can strategically plan future directions for fish health in South Australia.

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