



SOILED BY SALMON

7th November 2024

Dear Ms Browning and Mr Robinson,

We are writing on the occasion of the Soil Association's Annual General Meeting to ask that you desist at once from certifying farmed salmon as organic. We appreciate that there is a great deal of devil in the detail around finfish aquaculture certification, but at Ocean Rebellion we take the view that there can be no such thing as organic farmed salmon.

This position is not unique to us, nor is it new. We believe many people within your own organisation hold this view, which was expressed succinctly by Lawrence Woodward, former chairman of the Soil Association's standards committee, when he said in 2006 "*Salmon farming in cages has nothing at all to do with organic principles*".

In January of this year a coalition of NGOs led by WildFish repeated the demand that the Soil Association cease to certify salmon farms. The NGOs made clear that your tightened standards are still insufficient to justify the labels of sustainable and organic in a number of regards, including:

- Mortality rates
- Use of chemicals toxic to marine life
- Sea lice infestation
- Rates of escape, and thus hybridisation with wild salmon

Ocean Rebellion is fundamentally opposed to salmon farming, which we regard as an exemplar of industrial and unsustainable fishing practices. It is an industry driven by profit motives, with ambitious targets for growth, which is extractive of natural resources, and directly harmful to life. It is estimated that in a given year more fish is fed to Scottish farmed salmon than is eaten by the UK human population. At the same time mortality rates in salmon farms appear to be increasing, in part due to rising sea temperatures. This industry is the very opposite of sustainable, by any definition.

Meanwhile it will not have escaped your attention that the wild Atlantic Salmon is now on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Wild salmon are almost magical creatures, capable of both mutation and long-range migration. They will soon be extinct from UK rivers. Caged farming increases the pressure on wild salmon; as the numbers of farmed salmon grow, so the numbers of wild salmon decline, and will soon reach vanishing point.

The Soil Association organic logo has been a valuable tool in leading the UK public and producers towards more sustainable farming practices. It is being badly undermined by your insistence on certifying farmed salmon. We look forward to hearing that you have seen sense, and cut off this line of revenue for once and for all.

Yours sincerely,
Ocean Rebellion

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