

Joint effort key to safeguarding health and sustainability of aquaculture (Straits Times, 16 Aug 2023)

We refer to the letter by Mr Wilson Lau Jun Ming, “Fish farming in S’pore has to shift to closed containment method” (Aug 5).

Scale drop disease virus (SDDV), which is not known to infect humans, is endemic in the South-east Asian region.

The Singapore Food Agency (SFA) is supporting research on disease prevention measures against the virus, such as vaccine development, as part of the Singapore Food Story R&D Programme.

In addition, farms can tap SFA’s Aquatic Animal Health Services to seek professional consultations and disease investigations, as well as support for their farm biosecurity and management over the next four years.

SFA has been engaging aquaculture farms to adopt sustainable technologies such as closed containment aquaculture systems to build their resilience against climate change, as well as reduce incidences of fish diseases and mortality.

More importantly, farms are encouraged to adopt good husbandry practices to prevent the introduction and spread of diseases within farms, as well as the close monitoring of water quality and fish health.

Due to Singapore’s limited sea space, farms are inevitably clustered closely, and poor husbandry practices by one farm could affect most farms within the area. While the threat of SDDV is less severe in a closed containment system, vaccination and good husbandry practices remain key to tackling it.

Farmers can also tap SFA’s Agri-food Cluster Transformation Fund, comprising co-funding components (capability upgrading, innovation and test-bedding, and technology upscaling) to build and expand their production capacities and capabilities.

Singapore also has a vibrant and competitive financing ecosystem, and companies are encouraged to engage banks on their financing needs.

SFA is working closely with our local farms to make our “30 by 30” goal a reality, and we hope that consumers can also do their part in supporting our local farms so that collectively, we can ensure food security for Singapore.

Melvin Chow

Senior Director, Urban Food Solutions Division

Singapore Food Agency

Replies

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