

Quarantine and health certification in aquaculture

Introduction

- Quarantine and health certification programs are the essential components in the fight against diseases arising from the introduction or transfer of exotic fish and shellfish.

Quarantine as per OIE

- It is a process of maintaining a group of aquatic animals in isolation with no direct or indirect contact with other aquatic animals, in order to undergo observation for a specified length of time and, if appropriate, testing and treatment, including proper treatment of the effluent waters (OIE).
- a minimum period of quarantine, termed as quarantine period

Quarantine or quarantine measures

- Enforced to reduce or minimize the risk of introducing pathogens into the territory of the importing country or new location and their transmission to susceptible species.
- This is also aimed to prevent the introduction of potentially harmful and unapproved aquatic organisms, which may get inadvertently transported.

The basic requirements for effective quarantine include

- Adequate physical infrastructure
- Established operating protocols
- Adequate facilities for carrying out traceability, diagnosis of pathogens, containment measures etc.
- Well-trained personnel for undertaking the above work without lapse.

Health certification

- It is a process associated with any stock of aquatic animals that are either exported or imported and issued by well qualified personnel from a quarantine facility
- Samples collected for health surveillance should be large enough for screening and proper pathogen detection
- Samples should be collected preferably by stratified random sampling
- Surveillance sampling has also to be carried out in season best known to aggravate the incidence of the disease