

# HAVSBRÚN: VALUE ADDING MARINE PROTEINS

Turning pelagic catches and offcuts from filleting into meal and oil to produce feed for farmed fish can make perfect sense—and yield more seafood than expected, as one of the world’s leading salmon feed manufacturers will explain.

THE LAUNCH of Havsbrún in 1966 remains one of the major milestones not merely in the history of Fuglafjørður and that of the pelagic fishing industry but certainly in the economic history of the Faroe Islands. The giant processing plant focused squarely on producing fishmeal and fish oil up until the early 1980s, when a new opportunity arose: producing fish feed for new aquaculture industry. After a few years of development an investment was made in a decisive move destined to define the factory’s future.

Today owned by the Faroe Islands’ only publicly listed seafood company, farmed salmon success story Bakkafrost, Havsbrún is still considered a large fishmeal and fish oil producer; however, the company is just as much a salmon feed manufacturer serving the domestic and international markets, and a leading one at that.

Devoid of any interests in the catch sector, Havsbrún nonetheless played a significant role in the establishment of the Faroe Islands as a major rights holder in the blue whiting fishery of the Northeast Atlantic.

“People often tend to forget the importance of the infrastructure underpinning an industry,” said managing director Odd Eliassen. “For example, because of the abundance of blue whiting in Faroese waters and the fact that we were able to receive and process the very large volumes of the species that the pelagic fishing fleet would catch from the mid 1990s and onwards, we played an important part in the recovery of the pelagic industry. The vessels got their catch landed quickly, conveniently and efficiently and we would reduce the catch into meal and oil, which again we used as basic ingredients in the feed that we had started to produce for fish farms.”

Havsbrún’s claim on the viability of the Faroese aquaculture industry is even higher. As today’s main supplier of salmon feed for



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Managing Director Odd Eliassen.

the industry—feed of recognized superior quality thanks to its high percentage of marine proteins and Omega-3 fatty acids—the company helped pave the way for the premium brand image achieved in recent years by exporters of salmon from the Faroe Islands.

## ‘FULL VALUE’

A key concept that has gained prominence lately is that of full utilization of resources—that every part of each fish caught should be fully utilized. Perhaps unexpectedly, meanwhile, very few if any farm animals offer as high ‘food return’ on the ‘feed investment’ as Atlantic salmon.

“Full utilization of resources is the essence of what Havsbrún is all about,” Mr. Eliassen said. “Now we are pleased to see a growing awareness of this principle, both in business and in public policy discussions. At the same time, unfortunately, there seems to be some persistent confusion regarding the use of fishmeal and fish oil as ingredients in

fish feed. Some people think that using fishmeal and fish oil in feed is detrimental to the vitality of fish stocks and marine ecosystems; but they seem unaware of salmon’s exceptional feed conversion rate—for every 100 kilograms of feed intake, farmed Atlantic salmon returns 65 kg of finished seafood at the other end of the line. If you compare that with other fish or, say, chicken, not to mention cattle, you get much less meat in return for the feed. In our production we use every part of the catch including the offcuts from gutting and filleting—heads, viscera, bones, everything—and it all gets reduced to meal and oil and then mixed into salmon feed.”

Similarly, filleting one kg of blue whiting will leave you some 270 grams of actual seafood, whereas if you fillet one kg of salmon you’ll get 650 grams to eat. Meanwhile technological advances

in fish nutrition and feed processing enable Havsbrún to incrementally improve its products.

“The world’s total production of fishmeal and fish oil has remained stable at five million tonnes of meal and one million tonnes of oil. Demand meanwhile for healthy food such as salmon is growing at an exponential rate in Asia with an annual migration into the middle class of about 110 million people. The pressure is on to increase nutritional value of the fish feed in the most effective way, which means we have to constantly strive for further refinement and improvement, working in the fields of biology, chemistry, animal nutrition and processing technology. We believe in setting high standards for the entire seafood industry to propel it forward and make sure the Faroese community gets full value out of its rich resources.”

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Headquartered at Fuglafjørður in the Faroe Islands, Havsbrún is a modern, internationally renowned producer of fishmeal, fish oil, and fish feed. Almost all of the production is used for own fish feed with only a very small part being exported as meal and oil.

Havsbrún opened for business in 1966 and today is recognized as an international market leader with a relentless focus on research and development and with its own quality assurance laboratory.

Havsbrún only selects fish of the highest quality for use in its production. Coupled with our stringent quality assurance protocols, our exacting selection process of raw material ensures a finished product of the highest quality. The quality assurance laboratory at Havsbrún maintains cooperative alliances with research institutions, both domestically and internationally, thus assuring a constant flow of relevant, up-to-date knowledge that enables Havsbrún to produce the best products for the international market.

Havsbrún is a subsidiary of the Bakkafrost Group.



Pelagic fishing vessel Christian í Grótinum landing her catch to Havsbrún.

Havsbrún has been producing fishmeal and fish oil since 1966 and fish feed since 1983.



Loading fish feed onto a bulk freighter next to the Havsbrún facility.



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