Minister for Primary Industries and Water

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

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Tasmanian Government

25 NOV 2026

Mr Peter George
Member for Franklin
Email: haprocedure@parliament.tas.gov.au

Dear Mr George Peter,

Thank you for your constituent questions asked in Parliament on 29 October 2026 and 17 November concerning imported feed ingredients and the antibiotic residue testing of salmon.

29 October 2026: *My question comes from Lisa Litchens in Cygnet. Earlier this month, the New York Times published an explosive investigative report into supply chains of global aquaculture companies, revealing a litany of crimes. Cooke, the owner of Tassal, also owns Peru's largest fishmeal company, Copeinca, whose supply chain is linked to at least 30 fishing violations or other concerns, including fishing in marine protected areas, exceeding catch limits and operating without a valid permit. Has the Minister's department assessed where the fishmeal and fish oil fed to Tasmanian salmon comes from? Will he require the industry to disclose it publicly? And how can the Government vouch for the integrity of Tasmania's clean green brand if it does not know the origin of the main feed used here in salmon farms?*

In regard to the origins of fishmeal and fish oil imported into Australia the federal Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) under Australia's biosecurity legislation have responsibility for the relevant importation permit assessments.

17 November 2026: *My excellent question comes from a recreational fisher in Kingston concerned about what safeguards are in place to ensure antibiotic-treated salmon entering the market is safe for human consumption. According to the Food Standards Code, the maximum residue for oxytetracycline in salmonids is 0.2 milligrams per kilo. Can the Minister explain what testing takes place to ensure antibiotic residues in salmon sold for human consumption are within the legal limits? And is this testing conducted by independent Tasmanians, interstate authorities or by the salmon companies themselves?*

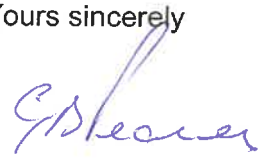
In relation to salmon sold for human consumption, food safety oversight for Tasmanian salmon producers is administered through a regulatory arrangement between the Australian Government and the Tasmanian Government under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DAFF and NRE Tas.

Under this arrangement, DAFF regulates the production and export of fish and fish products under the *Export Control Act 2020* and the *Export Control (Fish and Fish Products) Rules 2021*, while NRE Tas administers Tasmania's *Primary Produce Safety Act 2011* and *Primary Produce Safety (Seafood) Regulations 2023*.

To avoid duplication of regulatory activity, the MoU assigns responsibility for the registration and auditing of Tasmanian export fish establishments to DAFF. As all Tasmanian salmon producers are export registered, food safety controls and compliance requirements for these producers are assessed through DAFF's audit and regulatory program, which incorporates and aligns with relevant Tasmanian food safety requirements.

DAFF's audits include verification via records of the export registered business' adherence to withholding periods following antibiotic treatment and prior to processing fish. The business is also required to have a testing program that demonstrates fish products supplied for human consumption are not in breach of the maximum residue limit (MRL).

Yours sincerely



Hon Gavin Pearce MP
Minister for Primary Industries and Water