



Aquascot & Waitrose Annual Supplier Review Week



By Charlie Bullock
Aquascot



[top left] **Scottish Salmon Company 'Sgeir Dughall' Fish Farm Enclosures & Feed Barge Looking SW** [top right] **The MV Seaflower moored at the "Sgeir Dughall" Feed Barge** [bottom] **Dougie MacLeod Farm Manager explaining the salmon life cycle of the "Sgeir Dughall" farm.**

On the 24th June 2014 Waitrose & Aquascot held their 6th Annual Supplier Review and for the 3rd year in succession we returned to the New Kelso Lodge situated at the head of Loch Carron, Wester Ross approximately 60 miles SW of the highland capital Inverness.

New Kelso Lodge sits by the River Carron which has now become famous for one of the best restoration partnership projects between river owner, academia & business. The salmon and sea trout catches now being recorded is a testament to the vision set up many years ago.

The week long review is now a key strategic part of the

partnership relationship between Waitrose & Aquascot and all the farming stakeholders who supply all the Scottish farmed salmon & loch trout into the Waitrose business and respectively their customers.

The great oceanic, freshwater & highly scenic environments in this part of the highlands & islands is pivotal within the production plans of Scottish farmed salmon and some 20,000T can be produced between the famous sea lochs of the Carron, Kishorn, Shieldaig, Torridon and across to the Isle of Skye sea lochs of Ainort, Sligachan & Portree Bay.

Our farming stakeholders not only produce the farmed

salmon and trout that grace our plates but they also produce the juveniles in a number of freshwater facilities and Loch Kishorn is a farmed fish feed sea delivery hub.

In essence Aquaculture is a key strategic partner in what is a beautiful but fragile area and is a major contributor to ensuring that local schools, shops, restaurants and many other community projects thrive and grow.

The theme to this year's review was based on the three key elements;

- Security and continuity of supply
- Fit for the future
- Integrity and protection of the Waitrose brand

The week has allowed us to review with each of our farming partners in back to back reviews and with a clearly defined objective: Strategic review of future working, inclusive of document review and further cementing our long term partnership working framework.

We have all come away with a clear strategy for the next 12-18 months, with regular reviews in place to ensure delivery of the objectives set and confidence in delivering the growth

opportunities through delivery of consistent quality supply and ensuring we are fit for the future.

As part of the planned week objectives there is always time set aside for a study tour and this year we took a trip to visit the Scottish Salmon Company's seawater farm called "Sgeir Dughall" which is positioned in a very open sea location within the Loch Torridon cluster of farms.

The scenery around Loch Torridon and the coastline is breath taking and the farm has been planned and situated to blend in with its surroundings.

This farm is relatively new and is a multi-million pound capital investment with 14 x Fusion Triton Seawater enclosures and a substantial feed barge. All the staff, equipment, logistics and support services all come with a commitment to farm sustainably and maintain environmental excellence and with this access to the very best aquaculture equipment the demanding requirements made of them can be met.

The farm has been chosen through ways of working with an all-inclusive stakeholder group with all near neighbours and this working together concept can promote innovative solutions and ensure successful completion of these large capital projects, which is good for local jobs and tremendous for the reputation for Scottish farmed fish.

The farm visit was a great success taking a trip out on the "MV Seaflower" which is a local sea cruises boat run by father Kenny and daughter Gemma Livingston who we were kind enough to provide us with another well-known seafood delicacy the Loch Torridon Langoustine which is not to be missed.