



OPEN LETTER TO GAA MEMBERSHIP

The Global Aquaculture Alliance (GAA) has always been a solutions-oriented organization.

When the environmental community attacked shrimp farming in the late 1990s for mangrove deforestation, GAA launched a magazine to counter the misinformation being spread on mangrove deforestation and other issues. When the industry expressed the need to better collaborate in the early 2000s, GAA launched the annual conference now known as GOAL. When the marketplace expressed the need for third-party certification in the early 2000s, GAA established the program now known as the Best Aquaculture Practices.

GAA prides itself on its ability to proactively address the major challenges facing aquaculture, and 2015 was no different. Here's a recap of GAA's key achievements last year:

- **Social responsibility:** GAA took a stand against child labor and forced labor in the shrimp supply chain by prohibiting Best Aquaculture Practices (BAP)-certified processing plants from outsourcing the processing of shrimp to third parties.
- **Antibiotic abuse:** GAA developed a more rigorous risk-based testing methodology requiring automatic heightened testing of BAP-certified processing plants where residues of prohibited antibiotics are detected.
- **Disease management:** GAA and the Responsible Aquaculture Foundation developed four online educational modules to help farmers better manage early mortality syndrome (EMS), the shrimp disease that has cost the industry more than \$1 billion. The modules will be introduced in January.
- **Smallholder engagement:** GAA launched the iBAP program to better prepare small- and medium-scale facilities to apply for BAP certification through a step-by-step, deadline-driven improvement plan. Currently, there are 45 facilities worldwide enrolled in iBAP, representing 10 countries (Brazil, Chile, China, Ecuador, Honduras, India, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Thailand) and four species (salmon, shrimp, tilapia and trout) and aquaculture feed.
- **Assurance through third-party certification:** Twelve years after the first set of BAP standards were introduced, the number of BAP-certified facilities has surpassed 1,000, reaching 1,058 at the end of December. That a nearly 50% year-over-year increase.

As we look ahead to 2016, GAA is as well positioned as ever to fulfill its mission of promoting responsible aquaculture practices through advocacy, education and demonstration. But ensuring environmentally and socially responsible aquaculture and a safe seafood supply require your support and cooperation. Your membership brings benefits to you as well as the aquaculture community as a whole, including:

- **Networking:** Connect with a large network of seafood professionals and thought leaders at GAA's annual GOAL conference.
- **Discounts:** Qualify for registration and sponsorship discounts for the GOAL conference.
- **Exposure:** Get listed on the GAA website, with a link to your company's website.
- **News:** Since 1998, the *Global Aquaculture Advocate* has been a trusted source of information on responsible aquaculture. It will continue to be for years to come with the 2015 launch of a new *Advocate* website, advocate.gaalliance.org, featuring a variety of production-, supply- and market-related aquaculture news.

I ask you to please stand with GAA. We need your support and cooperation to carry out our mission of advancing environmentally and socially responsible aquaculture and ensuring a safe seafood supply. Thank you.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wally Stevens".

Wally Stevens
Executive Director
Global Aquaculture Alliance