



## Yellowtail kingfish grower goes year-round

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A Chile-based hatchery says it's achieved year-round spawning of yellowtail kingfish fingerlings, and has begun exporting them to grow-out facilities around the world.

Acuicola del Norte S.A. (Acuinor) is the first company in Chile to grow juvenile yellowtail kingfish, and now has four tanks producing broodstock throughout the year, General Manager Daniel Elton told **IntraFish**.

"Now we have spawning every week around the year," he said. "We are very proud of what we are doing in the hatchery, and the most important thing is we have this continuous spawning."



Yellowtail kingfish juvenile produced at Acuinor hatchery in Chile.

PHOTO: Acuinor

The company, which is working with Australia-based Nutrakol, a company specializing in nutritional and health solutions for aquaculture, has sold the juveniles - raised in indoor tanks -- to growers in the United States and Mexico, and will soon start shipping to farmers in Europe. Elton would not name the companies, saying they want to keep their activities quiet for now.

The company is getting funding from the Corporacion de Fomento de la Produccion (CORFO) for the next six years that he said will allow it to advance its research into the genetics of the yellowtail kingfish (*Seriola lalandi*).

"This means we have government support to develop the species -- different things like the technology for reproduction, to maintain broodstock and develop all the genetics," said Elton. "Our off-season eggs and larvae matched the qualities and performances of larvae from natural spawning season. Moreover,



Acuinor's four indoor hatchery tanks are capable of producing five million yellowtail kingfish juveniles a year. PHOTO: Acuinor

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the larvae survival rates exceeded our best expectations with almost no deformities. This is unheard of for *Seriola* species.”

Yellowtail kingfish fingerling production is taking place in two parts of the world: in Australia at Clean Seas and at the Acuino facility. “The differences between both is they produce only in summer and we can produce all year round because we have four tanks and 'different' summers for each tank,” said Elton.

The hatchery has production capacity for up to five million juveniles.



Chile-based Acuino is producing yellowtail kingfish juveniles year-round at its indoor hatchery.  
PHOTO: Acuino

Acuino has completed planning for its own grow-out facility, but has yet to start construction, he said.

“With the completion of the grow out facility, we will be able to answer any requirement from any market segment, from eggs to market-size fish” said Elton. “Moreover, since we will grow the fish ourselves, we will also be able to advise other farmers on the best practices for growing this high quality and, relatively, new species.”

The company says it believes yellowtail has the potential to become a mainstream aquaculture species, such as gilthead seabream in Europe, said Juan Lacamara, Elton’s partner. “It ticks all the right boxes: it has excellent flesh qualities; is considered premium-grade sashimi; has very fast growth rates, up to three kilograms in one year; and is regarded very highly in many countries,” said Lacamara.

As many other fast growing species, yellowtail kingfish, or hiramasa as its know in Japan, has some culture issues. A high percentage of deformities is one of the main problems, and spawning manipulation to achieve out-of-season spawning may contribute to this issue. To overcome these issues and to obtain the highest possible larvae and juveniles qualities, Elton said Acuino established a partnership with Nutrakol.

Nutrakol focuses on developing and manufacturing “tailor-made” nutritional solutions and natural health supplements based on herbal extracts. “There is no shortage of off-the-shelf nutritional additives, such as live food enrichment and broodstock additives,” said Judith Kolkovski, Nutrakol’s general manager.

“However, these usually designed to the more common marine species, such as seabream and seabass. In many cases, new species that have different growth parameters resulting in different nutritional requirements are not cater for.”

Most of the broodstock nutritional supplements are exactly that -- fatty acids, vitamins, minerals, etc. “We are looking one step ahead, supplying all the essential nutrients as well as other nutrients aimed at boosting the immune system and modulating the hormonal system,” she said.

“Nutragreen line of products comprises of several products solely based on herbal extracts. For example, Nutrabrood Enhance is aiming at improving and boosting the gonadal development boosting. This is especially critical for out-of-season spawners usually known to have lower quality eggs and larvae.”

As part of its collaboration with Acuino, the company reviewed the conditions of the fish, systems and the feeding protocols, then designed additives to suit and support the broodstock before, during and after the spawning season, taking in to account fish status and the environment, said Sagiv Kolkovski, Nutrakol’s research and development director.

Elton is scheduled to make a presentation on the company’s efforts at this week’s AquaSur conference in Chile.



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