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**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA, AUSTRALIA**

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## Media Release

### Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## \$6.5m aquaculture research facility opens today

The University of Tasmania will today open its new \$6.5 million aquaculture research facility at Taroona, the first of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere.

Construction on the facility began in February and was completed in September. The first salmon arrived last week.

The experimental research facility is managed by the University's Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) and will enable collaborative research, particularly with the Atlantic salmon industry, on the health and nutrition of large marine Atlantic salmon.

Tasmania's salmon farming is by far the largest aquaculture industry in Australia, and accounts for the bulk of seafood production in Tasmania.

The facility has specially designed systems to control environmental conditions including light, water quality and temperature to examine climate change effects relevant to local conditions. This will support development of different types of feed, feeds that optimise the use of marine ingredients, feeds that can be used to supply health treatments and feeds that produce efficient growth over a range of temperatures.

The facility will support the control of amoebic gill disease, Tasmania's most costly disease. It will speed up finding suitable treatments because it removes external environmental influences and shows more clearly the effect of different treatments.

The site uses of marine recirculation water systems which will assist in understanding their use in Tasmanian salmon production

It has been funded by the Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments, the Australian Seafood Cooperative Research Centre, the University of Tasmania, Huon Aquaculture Group and Tasmanian-based international aquafeed company Skretting Australia.

University of Tasmania Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the facility's opening showed the potential of research and innovation when supported by industry and government.

"The realisation of this project demonstrates how innovation can drive industry expansion, and we anticipate much interest from finfish producers from across the globe, as well as researchers and students," he said.

“This facility puts our state squarely at the forefront of best-practice in global finfish production, and makes us a world-leader in this field.”

The Head of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Centre, Professor Chris Carter, said the facility would benefit students at both the Taroona and Launceston campuses who specialise in aquaculture and marine environmental studies.

“The partnership between industry and IMAS researchers allows us to address local needs as well as global questions about climate change effects, seafood quality, replacement of marine ingredients and amoebic gill disease,” he said.

A 10-year agreement is in place between the University of Tasmania and industry for salmon and oyster research programs, and the Taroona site will be further developed to support this agreement.

**Information released by:**

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