

CITY OF COFFMAN COVE

RESOLUTION 13-23

A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION'S PRELIMINARY FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE QUALITY OF THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT IN THE UNITED STATES WITH APPROVAL OF AQUABOUNTY TECHNOLOGIES, INC'S APPLICATION TO MARKET GENETICALLY MODIFIED ATLANTIC SALMON IN THE UNITED STATES

WHEREAS, AquaBounty Technologies, Inc. has submitted an application to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval of the "AquaAdvantage Salmon", a genetically modified Atlantic salmon, for human consumption and marketing in the United States; and

WHEREAS, this is the first genetically modified animal intended to be used as food in the United States; and

WHEREAS, the Center for Veterinary Medicine prepared the "Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact" (FONSI) report for the FDA, which expresses support for approval of the "AquaAdvantage Salmon"; and

WHEREAS, the FONSI report states the social, economic and cultural effects of approving the rearing and eventual sale of the genetically modified AquaAdvantage Salmon to citizens of the United States have not been analyzed and evaluated; and

WHEREAS, the AquaAdvantage Salmon was bred by inserting a Pacific Chinook salmon growth hormone gene and an Ocean Pout antifreeze protein gene into fertilized eggs of wild Atlantic salmon. The fish that develop from these eggs have an enhanced growth rate compared to wild and farmed Atlantic salmon that are not genetically modified; and

WHEREAS, AquaBounty proposes fertilization and incubation to the eyed-egg stage on Prince Edward Island, Canada; shipment of the eyed-eggs to Panama; grow-out and processing of fish in Panama; and, shipment of processed fish to the United States for retail sale. Aqua Bounty maintains the land based rearing of the "AquaAdvantage Salmon" to be safely contained with a minimum risk of escapement into the wild; and, in the event there is an escape, believes the geographical area of the salmon rearing is unfavorable to the survival of "AquaAdvantage Salmon"; and

WHEREAS, Alaskans know all too well that fish farming containment measures are not fail-safe. Escaped farmed Atlantic salmon from British Columbia fish farms are found in Alaskan waters and are mixing with our wild stocks of Pacific salmon. In addition, AquaBounty does not adequately address the possibility of eyed-eggs making their way into the Prince Edward Island streams that flow into the Northern Atlantic Ocean and are currently the spawning grounds for adult hatchery-reared Atlantic salmon; and

WHEREAS, the development of "AquaAdvantage Salmon" has been ongoing for approximately 15 years, yet the product has not been the subject of thorough scientific research and testing to ensure its consumption by humans is safe in the long term; and

WHEREAS, many salmon consumers purchase the product for its widely recognized health benefits, and this lack of safe consumption testing could weaken consumer confidence in all salmon products. Weakened consumer confidence would cause undue financial stress on all wild seafood based livelihoods; and

WHEREAS, Alaska’s wild seafood industry, which is extremely important to the state’s economy and is one of the largest industries in Coffman Cove, could be severely impacted by the sale of genetically modified salmon; and

WHEREAS, there is no shortage of farmed Atlantic salmon. The sole purpose of genetically modifying Atlantic salmon is to increase profits for biotechnology firms and salmon farms by creating faster growing fish. While most consumers prefer wild salmon, if the price difference between wild and farmed salmon widens due to a flooded farmed salmon market with the faster-growing AquaAdvantage Salmon, the probability that a consumer chooses farmed salmon will increase. This will directly harm our commercial fishermen; and

WHEREAS, should the FDA approve AquaBounty’s application to market their product in the United States, it is critical that the product be mandated to be clearly labeled “Genetically Modified” to allow consumers to make an informed choice regarding their health and well-being. Alaska statutes require such labels be prominently displayed on the front of the package.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Coffman Cove City Council by this resolution does not support the FDA’S “Preliminary Finding of No Significant Impact” or approval of genetically engineered salmon for sale in the United States.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED if, despite strong environmental and human health concerns and lacking the evaluation of the social, economic and cultural effects on the United States and its citizens, the application is approved by the FDA, product labeling requirements should include the words “Genetically Modified” prominently displayed in a minimum font size and a contrasting color on the front of the package.

PASSED AND APPROVED on this _____ of _____, 2013.

MAYOR, CAROLYN DUNCAN

CITY CLERK, JEAN SODERBERG