



AVA'S SUCCESSFUL SPAWNING OF POMPANO IN TROPICAL WATERS

Part of efforts to help local fish farmers improve productivity

The Agri-Food & Veterinary Authority of Singapore (AVA) has successfully spawned pompano (golden pomfret) fry in tropical waters. This is the first time it is achieved on a commercially viable scale in Singapore.

2. Following successful spawning of pompano at AVA's Marine Aquaculture Centre (MAC), AVA worked with a local fish farm to transfer the technology and develop a pompano breeding programme for the farm. Based on AVA's structured and scientific approach, the pompano broodstock from AVA had successfully spawned at Rong-Yao Fisheries Pte Ltd on 29 October 2011. This batch of fry would be ready for the market in April-May period.

Efforts to help local fish farms improve productivity

3. Local farming complements our source diversification strategy to ensure a resilient food supply for Singapore. It is important for us to raise the productivity and capability of our farms to maximise the limited land and sea space that we have for local farming. AVA has stepped up our efforts to help local farms increase productivity to meet Singapore's target of 15% of food fish consumed locally. In less than two years, the percentage of food fish produced locally has risen from approximately 4.5% in 2009 to approximately 7% currently.

4. Chief Executive Officer of AVA, Ms Tan Poh Hong said: "AVA continues to look at ways to help our local farms improve their productivity. Other than working closely with individual farms to find out their needs, we invest in R&D to look into the technology, which we can then transfer to help uplift the industry. We are happy that farmers are coming together and working with us to ramp up supply. We also hope that consumers will support them – choose local produce."

5. Mr Seah Kian Peng, CEO (Singapore), NTUC FairPrice, said, "As a homegrown retailer, FairPrice has always supported local food producers including local fish farms. This also allows us to satisfy the growing demand for fish with a wider range of safe, quality products that are locally bred, farmed and even fresher. We are pleased to partner AVA and local fish farmers in raising the awareness for home grown fish and to make it available to our customers."

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6. The pompano breeding programme will allow local farms to develop the technical capabilities in breeding this species and reduce their reliance on imported fry, which is seasonal in nature. Local farms will thus have a ready supply of pompano fry, which would in turn boost local food fish production. Local production of pompano was approximately 4.4 tonnes in 2010, and a five-fold increase to about 20 tonnes is expected this year. By 2012, the supply of pompano is expected to be 80-100 tonnes.

7. AVA also continues to support local fish farms by providing technical assistance, advising on good farm management and conducting workshops on fish health management. AVA encourages local fish farms to tap on its Food Fund for upgrading capability, where AVA would help farms identify equipment, which would benefit them in terms of increasing productivity.

AVA's Marine Aquaculture Centre

8. AVA's MAC, located at St John's Island, was set up to develop and harness technology to facilitate the development and expansion of large-scale hatchery and fish farming production in Singapore and the region. The centre promotes the reliable supply of a variety of tropical food fish to local consumers, through which helping to stabilise Singapore's fish supply and ensure safe and wholesome fish for consumers.

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