New National Gathering for Canada's Freshwater Fish Farmers

Inaugural event taking part April 7 - 8 in Muskoka, Ontario

HUNTSVILLE, ON – The Ontario Aquaculture Association (OAA) is proud to announce the launch of the **Canadian Freshwater Aquaculture Conference** (CFAC), set to take place April 7 – 8, 2026 at Deerhurst Resort in Muskoka, Ontario.

This new national-scale event builds on more than 40 years of farmer-focused gatherings by Ontario's strong fish-farming community and broadens the invitation to fish farmers, suppliers, researchers, Indigenous partners, and regulatory collaborators from across Canada.

Farmers First
Ontario has had a vibrant community of fish farmers for more than four decades, and the OAA's annual conference has long been a cornerstone of that community — a time to share information, connect, learn, and socialize.

With the Canadian Freshwater Aquaculture Conference, that spirit is going national. The event will bring together those working in freshwater aquaculture who raise fish outside the salmon-marine framework, especially small and mid-sized operations growing trout, Arctic char, and other alternative species.

"Each year we've seen more farmers from more provinces show up, share ideas, and feel like they've found their people," said RJ Taylor, Managing Director of the Ontario Aquaculture Association. "It's turned into the go-to event for freshwater producers of all sizes, and now we're excited to take it national. What makes it stand out is that it's truly built for farmers — owners, managers, and those building their careers in aquaculture."

What to Expect
Over two days, attendees will:

- Explore the latest innovations in freshwater aquaculture:
    - Technology for better fish health;
    - Advances in recirculation and re-use systems for juvenile production;
    - Strategies to build more aquaculture in the Great Lakes region;
    - Real-world climate change adaptations for aquaculture;

    - Building social licence and community support
    - Special symposiums on Arctic char and other alternative species
- Hear from peers who live the day-to-day realities of fish farming.
- Network with suppliers, service providers and industry partners who understand freshwater production and non-salmon systems.
- Join a tradeshow of up to 50 exhibitors showcasing gear, technology and services tailored to freshwater fish farms.
- Participate in social events including a Tailgater Social and a gala dinner featuring a “Fishwear Contest” (bring your fish-themed outfit or accessory!).

Why It Matters
Freshwater aquaculture in Canada is evolving rapidly. With growing interest in species such as Arctic char and trout, and an increasing focus on sustainability, re-use technology and climate resilience, there is a pressing need for a place where farmers and suppliers can meet, exchange real-world lessons and build connections. CFAC is designed exactly for that, curated by farmers, for farmers.

Registration & Participation
Registration is now open. Exhibitor and sponsor opportunities are available. Details and pricing can be found online at https://ontarioseafoodfarmers.ca/cdn-freshwater-aqua-conference/

Location
The venue is Deerhurst Resort, located in the beautiful Muskokas region, approximately two hours from Toronto’s Pearson Airport, and offers a scenic and accessible setting for this national gathering.

About the Ontario Aquaculture Association
The Ontario Aquaculture Association is the voice of the freshwater fish-farming community in Ontario. For over 40 years, the Association has hosted farmer-focused events and helped build a robust network of growers, suppliers and industry partners. With the Canadian Freshwater Aquaculture Conference, the OAA invites fish-farmers and suppliers from across Canada to join in shaping the future of freshwater aquaculture.

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