



## **Bell Aquaculture Breaks Ground On \$5 Million Expansion At Nation's Largest Yellow Perch Fish Farm In Indiana**

***Bell Aquaculture, a pioneer in sustainable fish farming operations, is expanding its production facility in Albany, IN. Formed in 2005, Bell Aquaculture is the nation's largest yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*) fish farm. Ground was broken today on a \$5 million expansion project.***

**Redkey, IN - June 3, 2011** - Bell Aquaculture, a pioneer in sustainable fish farming operations, broke ground today on a \$5 million expansion at its production facility in Albany, IN -- the nation's largest yellow perch (*Perca flavescens*) fish farm. The announcement is made by Norman McCowan, president of Bell Aquaculture, who says, "Our team has been working diligently to bring this expansion to fruition and are thrilled the financing finally came together to help fuel Bell Aquaculture's continued growth."

Further, according to McCowan: "We are happy to partner with The Conservation Fund, Indiana Soybean Alliance, and Pranger Enterprise, Inc., to further develop Indiana aquaculture using sustainable water recycling technology. The added capacity of 3 million more fish per year is much needed to meet our growing customer demand."

Those in attendance at the ground breaking included: Ed Messer, Construction Management; Nick Zaccaria, Bell Aquaculture; Nick Pranger, Construction Management; Gabe Pranger, Construction Management; Steve Summerfelt, The Conservation Fund; Joe Hankins, The Conservation Fund; Mike Hines, Bell Aquaculture; Steve Hart, Indiana Soybean Alliance; Norman McCowan, Bell Aquaculture; Brian Baldwin, Bell Aquaculture; Ann Baldwin, Bell Aquaculture; Josh Pranger, Construction Management; Bruce Baldwin, Muncie-Delaware County Economic Development Alliance; and Mike Swinford, Briner Construction.

### **Bell Perch™ Yellow Perch**

Yellow perch is one of the most popular of all North American pan fish. It has a mild, sweet flavor with firm white flesh and low fat levels, making it a favorite in residential and commercial kitchens alike. There's no taste difference from wild-caught like some other farmed species. In years past, yellow perch was the fish typically served at Friday Night Fish Frys in the Great Lakes region, particularly during Lent (the period prior to Easter).

"The greatest difficulty in recent years has been the availability of yellow perch out of Lake Michigan and Lake Erie – the two predominant lakes for the supply of wild-caught yellow perch," explains McCowan. "Which means restaurants that were typically serving customers who enjoy the taste of yellow perch and individual consumers, just couldn't get the supply. Or, in some cases, they are getting lesser quality fish and selling it as yellow perch."

The vision for a yellow perch farm was born when Founder Michael Miller became personally interested in aquaculture in 1994. After studying this science and becoming involved in the Indiana Aquaculture Association, Inc. (IAAI), he developed a dream to bring the local and personal favorite, yellow perch, back to the area.

As McCowan says, "What started out as an idea on a Post-it note, ended up being 17 file cabinets of information." So after more than 12 years of research, consulting fish experts and a lot of hard work, Bell Aquaculture was formed in 2005.

**-More-**

Bell Aquaculture is committed to these four guiding principles in producing its fish:

- 1) Controlled indoor environment
- 2) Toxin & mercury free – no hormones used
- 3) Healthy growth
- 4) Gentle to the environment

For complete information about Bell Aquaculture's sustainability and stewardship initiatives, visit:

<http://www.bellaquaculture.com/sustainability-stewardship>

### **Fish Rich Product Line Launched June 1**

Earlier this week, Bell Aquaculture announced the launch of its new product, **Fish Rich Organic Fertilizer 2-3-2** (Fish Rich), available for purchase online at the company website. Fish have been used as soil fertilizer since the Native Americans first began farming our nearby land centuries ago. Bell Aquaculture's new natural plant fertilizer, Fish Rich, is made from the remains of the Bell Perch processed at its aquaculture facility in Albany, Indiana.

Fish Rich is made from toxin- and mercury-free fish, has a very mild fish odor and is good for any soil. Fish Rich contains these three major nutrients: nitrogen, which promotes green leaves, and quicker growth response; phosphorous, which is good for root growth, disease resistance, promoting seed and fruit growth, and for blooming and flowering; and potassium, which increases root growth, and offers disease and drought resistance.

Further, Fish Rich is also a good source of calcium. Calcium is essential for all plants and their maturity. Plants need calcium for cell wall development and growth. Pathogens attack weak cell walls to invade a plant, and a stronger cell wall structure will play a big part in avoiding this potential problem.

Fish Rich is made at Bell Aquaculture's recently built fertilizer building. The facility houses a 5,000 square foot production floor, already manufacturing the 2-3-2 Organic Fish Rich product, and a state-of-the-art lab set-up to handle special orders for custom blends of fertilizer as well. For more information, visit: <http://www.bellaquaculture.com/our-products/fish-rich>.

### **About Bell Aquaculture**

Bell Aquaculture, headquartered in Redkey, IN, is a producer and processor of farm-raised fish for restaurants and consumer use. Production facilities, dedicated to yellow perch, are located in Albany, IN, and comprise the nation's largest yellow perch farm. More information about Bell Aquaculture is available at <http://www.bellaquaculture.com>.

### **Bell Aquaculture also is found on these social media sites:**

Twitter: <http://twitter.com/BellAquaculture> - <http://twitter.com/INYellowPerch> - <http://twitter.com/FriNightFishFry>

Facebook Fan Page: <http://www.facebook.com/bellperch>

News Feed Blog: <http://indianayellowperch.blogspot.com>

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