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## **Open Ocean Aquaculture Expands and Diversifies**

Searsmont, ME (May 28, 2009) - The deep waters off South Korea and Mexico are now home to two new state of the art, open ocean aquaculture operations. These pioneering projects are made possible by Ocean Farm Technologies (OFT), a Maine based company specializing in the design and production of equipment for open ocean aquaculture. Each installation marks a significant advancement for this promising new technology based around OFT's specially engineered submersible net pen, the Aquapod™.

Composed of hundreds of individual triangular panels made of recycled polyethylene which are covered with steel wire mesh and joined together to form a geodesic sphere, the Aquapod's unique structure is designed for use in high-energy, open ocean sites. The recently deployed Aquapods each have a volume of 3,625 cubic meters (957,000 gallons) and a diameter of 20 meters (64 feet).

Both newly installed farms which are owned and operated by separate privately held companies are located several kilometers from shore in waters around 60 meters (197 feet) deep. Relocating fish farms away from protected near shore sites to deep water locations with strong and consistent currents can significantly reduce environmental impacts while simultaneously optimizing growing conditions. Unlike traditional marine aquaculture operations, these new open ocean fish farms avoid near-shore common use conflicts, but being exposed to harsh open ocean conditions creates new challenges. The unique design of the Aquapod prevents both weather and predator related escapes. Submerging Aquapods to deep, calm waters protects them from hurricanes and typhoons which can destroy traditional floating net pens. Sharks, sea lions, seals and other predators also can breach conventional nets causing catastrophic crop loss and escapement but are thwarted by the steel wire mesh surrounding an Aquapod.

Okwang Fisheries Union in South Korea and Pesquera Delly in Sonora, Mexico both have long-established roots in traditional fisheries. They represent a growing number of successful fishing companies that are actively pursuing sustainable open ocean aquaculture as the solution to the declining supply of wild fish and a steadily increasing demand for seafood. Okwang will raise Pacific cod in the deep, cold waters off Korea, while Pesquera Delly is pioneering shrimp culture in the Sea of Cortez. These companies represent the forefront of marine aquaculture development in their countries. OFT anticipates expansion in these progressive companies and the emergence of additional open ocean aquaculture operations in both of these regions. Pesquera Delly has already placed an order for two more Aquapods which will be delivered to Mexico later this summer.

Founded in 2005, Ocean Farm Technologies has deployed Aquapod net pens of various sizes in Puerto Rico, Panama, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Maine.

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Three A3600 Aquapods during assembly in Yangyang, South Korea.



An A3600 Aquapod positioned on a crane barge at sunrise in Yangyang, South Korea.



An A3600 Aquapod during installation in Guaymas, Mexico.



Sunset over an A3600 being towed to the installation site off Guaymas, Mexico.

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