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Hoppy New Year!

Something good is brewing for the sustainable seafood movement.

A popular microbrewery that produces Fat Tire Amber Ale & other malt beverages is using brewery waste to produce an environmentally friendly fish food for commercial aquaculture.



With the help of venture capitalists and the National Science Foundation, New Belgium Brewing Co. in Fort Collins, Colorado is the site of a pilot project to use wastewater from the brewery to create a high-protein ingredient to feed farm-raised fish including salmon and rainbow trout.

That would potentially reduce the volume of wild-caught fish that have to be converted to fishmeal for a burgeoning aquaculture industry worldwide, according to an article in the Rocky Mountain News.

"We can't support the growth of the aquaculture business using fish to feed fish," said Randy Swenson, CEO of Oberon FMR Inc. told the paper. "The business we're in is fish meal replacement."

Oberon, based in Idaho Springs, Colorado has teamed with the Colorado School of Mines and New Belgium to brew up its "fish meal replacement" the plant. The idea is to feed the protein-laden bacteria already swarming in the brewing wastewater and convert them into a protein-rich biomass. The resulting "Jell-O-like goop" will be dried into granules as a substitute for fish meal in aquaculture feed.

The same process could be used with wastewater from other food-related plants such as those making soy milk or jam, according to John Spear, an assistant professor of environmental science and engineering at the Colorado School of Mines.

So the next time you hoist your favorite brew, consider: You could be contributing to a solution for one of the big challenges that keeps aquaculture from being a sustainable source of protein for a hungry world.



Posted by Ken Peterson on January 02, 2008 at 10:23 AM