



April 2nd, 2022

Animal Welfare Policy

Protecting, supporting, and optimizing the welfare of our fish is the fundamental principle that drives how our management and staff operate and care for our farm. The health, nutrition, environment, and comfort of our fish are of the utmost importance. These priorities are at the heart of Matorka's ethical animal husbandry practices.

The environment

The basis for fish welfare is providing them with pristine, oxygen-rich water. First of all, our unique lava fields of the Reykjanes peninsula provide an excellent natural filtration for Iceland's ample precipitation, which then percolates into the peninsula and seeps onwards towards our farm. At Matorka, we ensure that the water is free from undesirable metals, such as iron, and has the correct pH level. We also ensure the proper balance of gasses within the water, lowering levels of certain gasses and increasing oxygen. Our water and oxygen distribution systems and processes within the farm have been designed by the world's leading aquaculture engineers to optimize animal welfare.

Staff and management training

Our staff are educated and trained on our robust internal and external quality standards for welfare conditions. Matorka's management and staff are routinely schooled in how to optimize and control the conditions our fish need to thrive. They are also regularly counseled by veterinarians and other professionals in the field of fish welfare. When rearing the fish from egg to harvest, the training focuses on how to avoid and/or minimize any sort of discomfort the fish might experience.

Feed

Matorka uses only specially formulated feed for each of the species we farm. Not only are these specific to our Arctic Char and Steelhead, but the feeds are also unique to the needs of our environmentally friendly, on-land farming systems. The nutrient and energy content of the feeds take into account the exact temperatures, salinity, and waterflows of our particular farm design. Additionally, our feeds are non-GMO certified, as are their ingredients. All of these elements ensure optimal nutrition from egg to harvest.

Farmed responsibly in Grindavik, Iceland



Fish handling

One of the most important points of fish farming is when live fish must be transferred within or between aquaculture stations. These sorts of transports are necessary in all aquaculture operations, but we keep them to a bare minimum at Matorka. The transport equipment must meet our internal quality standards and must pass a rigorous inspection by our staff and management. Protocols for fish transfer are not only set internally, but also set by the external aquaculture standards we proudly adhere to.

Health and wellness of our fish

At Matorka, we vaccinate our Arctic Char in order to give it protection from harmful bacteria that are inevitably found in nature. During the vaccination, the fish are administered an anesthetic as directed by veterinarians. Per veterinarian protocols and standard humane treatment of animals, Matorka may use medicine prescribed and administered by a veterinarian. Any and all such treatment is in accordance with EU laws and regulations and is in the strictest compliance with the veterinarian prescription. This may include antibiotics, but they would only be used to treat a bacterial infection and never for disease prevention or growth purposes. Furthermore, Matorka has a strict policy against hormonal or anti-parasitic treatments.

Harvesting

At harvesting, Matorka uses state-of-the-art electric stunners that render fish unconscious, a method that is globally considered one of the most humane and also is in accordance with EU standards on humane treatment of animals. This minimizes any stress or suffering our fish may experience during the harvesting process.

Quality Standards

In addition to adhering to our own internal quality standards and local regulatory framework, Matorka is compliant with multiple world-renowned environmentally sustainable and socially responsible certifications that address animal welfare. Their standards have been set by leaders in animal husbandry and welfare, including academics, environmental experts, scientists, industry professionals, non-profits, and more. Matorka is proud to be certified by the following world-leading aquaculture standards:

Aquaculture Stewardship Counsel / ASC



ECOCERT / Whole Foods Markets



GlobalG.A.P



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