

Fish Farmer Explores Marketing Methods

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farm.

First on his agenda was to diversify sales. "I was looking for year-round cash flow," he said.

Scott quickly saw that he had to learn to debone fish to compete with the supplies from Idaho. He learned to debone — he was able to do 100 fish an hour — so he could have an edge on the market over the western fish, since the fish he could supply to East Coast markets were two days fresher.

The business grew, and "I realized I couldn't grow enough fish to meet demand," he said. "I decided to buy fish to supplement my supply to restaurants."

In 1982 he began calling other hatcheries for his trout supply. "I got great deals in summer," he said. The mar-

ket swung seasonally and dropped after stream stocking demand was over. "I knew restaurants could give me year-round cash flow, so I could do year-round production and sales," he said.

This line of reasoning led Scott and, by now, several employees to butcher 1,200 pounds of fish per week and purchase fish from hatcheries in western Pennsylvania and Virginia.

Scott re-invested back into the business and bought a refrigerated truck.

By now, there was a marked change in Scott's operation from producer to processor and marketer. "My own supply became a backup to imported supply" he said, as he delivered fish to Philadelphia and surrounding areas.

A question from a restaurant chef who asked if Scott

sold anything else sparked his idea to diversify even further into niche markets. He formed a working partnership with a nearby farmer who raised pheasants, rounded up a supply of quail eggs, ducks, and even began to cut water-cress from his own ponds, which he sold to restaurants. He also began experimenting with free-range chickens and the sale of eggs.

In addition, "I went to trade shows to look for products as I shifted my focus from what to grow to what to sell," he said.

Reading about how Salmon is a high-quality alternative to trout, Scott decided to market Salmon from Seattle and Vancouver in the East Coast, especially Philadelphia.

The busy, 70-hour-a-week schedule, which began with picking up Salmon at the



Hatchling fish. "The longer you can keep them indoors, the less trouble you'll have with predators," said Scott. However, "outside it is less crowded and the fish get better color and grow faster."

Philadelphia airport and included hours of set up and delivery of Salmon and the other products, "became labor intensive," he said. "I

decided to go back into law and try my hand at politics."

In 1990 he was elected township supervisor, in 1992

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Here Scott shows fingerling Brown Trout.



This is an empty hatching jar, which gets a steady supply of fresh water from the pipeline.

