

Operating an Integrated Shrimp Farm in Latin America: The Panama Experience

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ABSTRACT

Ralston Purina, through a wholly owned subsidiary, Agromarina de Panama S.A., operates a successful integrated 600-hectare shrimp farm in the Republic of Panama. The operation is based on a semi-intensive culture system that uses advanced technology in maturing and spawning commercial quantities of shrimp in captivity, rearing larvae in a hatchery and growing shrimp to marketable size in ponds on balanced feeding rations. The method of farming shrimp was developed over a 10-year period and the viability of the technology is in the system and management.

The objective of our effort is to produce a dependable supply of high quality product at costs less than commercial fishing, that would not be subject to the traditional variables associated with fishing a natural resource. To accomplish this objective, we are using an integrated profit oriented approach aimed at commercializing research accomplishments and existing technology. Our production system can best be described as an industrial process, since we produce our own resource and control the process from the seed to the marketable product.