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30 August 2015

### **Public Pledge to Stop Certifying Seal-Killing Salmon Farms**

Further to previous correspondence on the issue of seal-killing at salmon farms (see enclosed Appendix 2), could you please make a public commitment to end the inhumane practice of killing seals at RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food certified salmon farms?

The Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA) will be organising a series of protests around the UK in the run up to Halloween and Christmas and would appreciate a public pledge to end seal-killing at RSPCA Assured /Freedom Food certified salmon farms. We intend to deliver seal corpses killed by salmon farms back to the agencies who sponsor the slaughter.

A public commitment to establish a cease-fire would be much appreciated by **30 September 2015**. If you would like to meet in person or speak on the phone please do not hesitate to contact me.

Newly obtained data from the Scottish Government (sourced from return forms submitted quarterly by salmon farming companies in Scotland in 2013 and 2014 - see enclosed in Appendix 1) reveals that:

- over half (51%) of salmon farms in Scotland killed at least one seal and almost a quarter (23%) of salmon farms in Scotland killed at least two seals

Since RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food certifies ca. 70% of Scottish salmon farming production, the number of seals killed at RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food certified salmon farms must be significant.

How many seals were killed at RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food certified salmon farms in 2013, 2014 and thus far in 2015?

Here's the top 10 seal-killing salmon farm sites (2013 to January 2015\*):

- #1: East Voe Laxfirth, Shetland (Hjaltland/Grieg) - 24
- #2: Veantrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 13
- #3: West of Balta Island, Shetland (Balta Island Seafare): 7
- #4 =: South Voe of Gletness, Shetland (Hjaltland/Grieg): 6
- #4=: Bellister, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 6
- #6 =: Gometra, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Salmon Company): 5\*
- #6 =: Loura Voe, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 5

#6 =: Taranaish, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis (Scottish Salmon Company): 5

#6 =: West Voe, Shetland (Bound Skerries Seafood): 5

#10 =: Grunna Voe, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 4

#10 =: Ardchattan Bay, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (Dawnfresh): 4

#10 =: Toyness, Scapa Flow, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 4

\* Some data for January 2015 was made available by the Scottish Government. GAAIA filed a FOI request on 24 August 2015 requesting all seal-killing data for 2015 (a reply is expected in late September 2015).

Moreover, the data reveals that out of 173 seals killed during 2013 and 2014 only 19 carcasses (11%) were reported, 16 carcasses recovered (9%) and only one carcass (<1%) collected via the [Scottish Marine Animal Strandings Scheme](#).

Does the RSPCA/Freedom Food condone the practice of leaving seal corpses to rot (and potentially spread disease) around the coast of Scotland?

When badgers are culled on land, for example, surely their corpses are disposed of humanely? Why is not the same level of humanity and animal welfare afforded to seals?

The data (enclosed in Appendix 1) also reveals that:

- Shetland is the most lethal region representing almost half (49%) of seal killings following by Orkney (15%) and Argyll & Bute (14%)
- the most deadly salmon farm is Hjaltland/Grieg's salmon farm at East Voe Laxfirth in Shetland followed by Scottish Seafarms' salmon farm at Veantrow Bay in Orkney
- the Norwegian-owned companies Scottish Seafarms (Leroy/Salmar) and Hjaltland Seafarms (Grieg Seafood) are the most deadly companies
- Scottish Seafarms killed 56 seals during 2013 and 2014 - almost a third (32%) of all seals killed by salmon farms in Scotland
- other trigger-happy salmon farmers are the Scottish Salmon Company, Marine Harvest and Balta Island Seafare

A list of all the Scottish salmon farms killing seals in 2013 and 2014 is enclosed below in Appendix 1. For all the source data and copies of seal-killing returns forms please read:

["Appendix: Companies, Regions & Sites"](#)

["Appendix: Source Data - Seal Killing Return Forms Submitted by Salmon Farms"](#)

[250 PDFs in a 10 MB Zip file are available via Dropbox - please email [dstaniford@gaaia.org](mailto:dstaniford@gaaia.org)].

Sadly, the RSPCA/Freedom Food/RSPCA Assured has stubbornly refused to name the salmon farms it certifies under the welfare scheme although according to Freedom Food (as quoted in a press release issued by the [Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation](#)): "more Freedom Food labelled smoked and fresh salmon available than ever before in UK supermarkets including the Co-operative, Somerfield, Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco".

Freedom Food told GAAIA in January 2015 (see Appendix 2):

"Approximately 70 per cent of farmed Scottish Salmon is produced under Freedom Food. You will appreciate that due to data protection, we are unable to provide you with a list of Freedom Food approved salmon members. The number of seals shot on our farms, as a last resort, has significantly reduced over the last seven years and continues to do so year on year. We are unable to disclose the figures as they are submitted to us by our members, in confidence, for the benefit of developing the scheme."

The RSPCA's then Chief Executive, Gavin Grant, told GAAIA in July 2012:

"In 2008, 460 seals were shot at Freedom Food farms. This was totally unacceptable and led to our standards being re-written. In 2010 the number declined to 52, a reduction of 90 per cent. In 2011, this figure was further reduced to 46".

[Note that the figure for 46 dead seals in 2011 was upgraded to 61 during a Radio 4 broadcast on 18 October 2012: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01nbqzc>]

The Daily Telegraph [reported](#) in April 2015:

"More than a quarter of the seals killed along the nation's coastline last year were shot by RSPCA-accredited fish farmers. In Scotland alone, 205 seals are known to have been legally killed to protect stocks of salmon and other fish. Of those, 52 were shot by the animal welfare charity's Freedom Food initiative, which is dedicated to improving conditions for farm animals."

In 2008, The Guardian reported via "[RSPCA warns Scottish salmon farmers to shoot fewer seals](#)":

"Salmon farmers could be expelled from one of the UK's leading animal welfare schemes if they continue shooting seals in large numbers, after scientists warned that common seals are suffering a catastrophic decline. The RSPCA is to warn more than 80 fish farms that are members of its Freedom Foods welfare accreditation scheme that they must curb the practice or face losing their valuable membership of the scheme. The retailer Sainsbury's has also promised it will phase out suppliers associated with seal shooting after the Guardian revealed that common seal numbers fell by a quarter last year in some parts of the UK and by 50% over the past five years in others."

How many members have been expelled for killing seals?

Wester Ross Fisheries boast of their RSPCA/Freedom Food certification via their [web-site](#). Loch Duart also boasts of their RSPCA/Freedom Food certification via their [web-site](#). Marine Harvest, according to your [newsletter](#), have sourced Sainsbury's with Freedom Food certified farmed salmon. Grieg Seafood also claims to be both RSPCA/Freedom Food certified and organically certified on their [web-site](#).

According to the data disclosed on 21 August 2015 by the Scottish Government: Wester Ross Fisheries killed three seals in 2014; Loch Duart killed eight seals in 2014; Marine Harvest killed 12 seals in 2013 and 2014 and Grieg Seafood (owners of Hjaltland Seafarms) killed six seals in 2014 and a staggering 30 in 2013.

Read more on this emotive issue via:

["Mass seal slaughter as RSPCA opts to protect fish farms"](#)

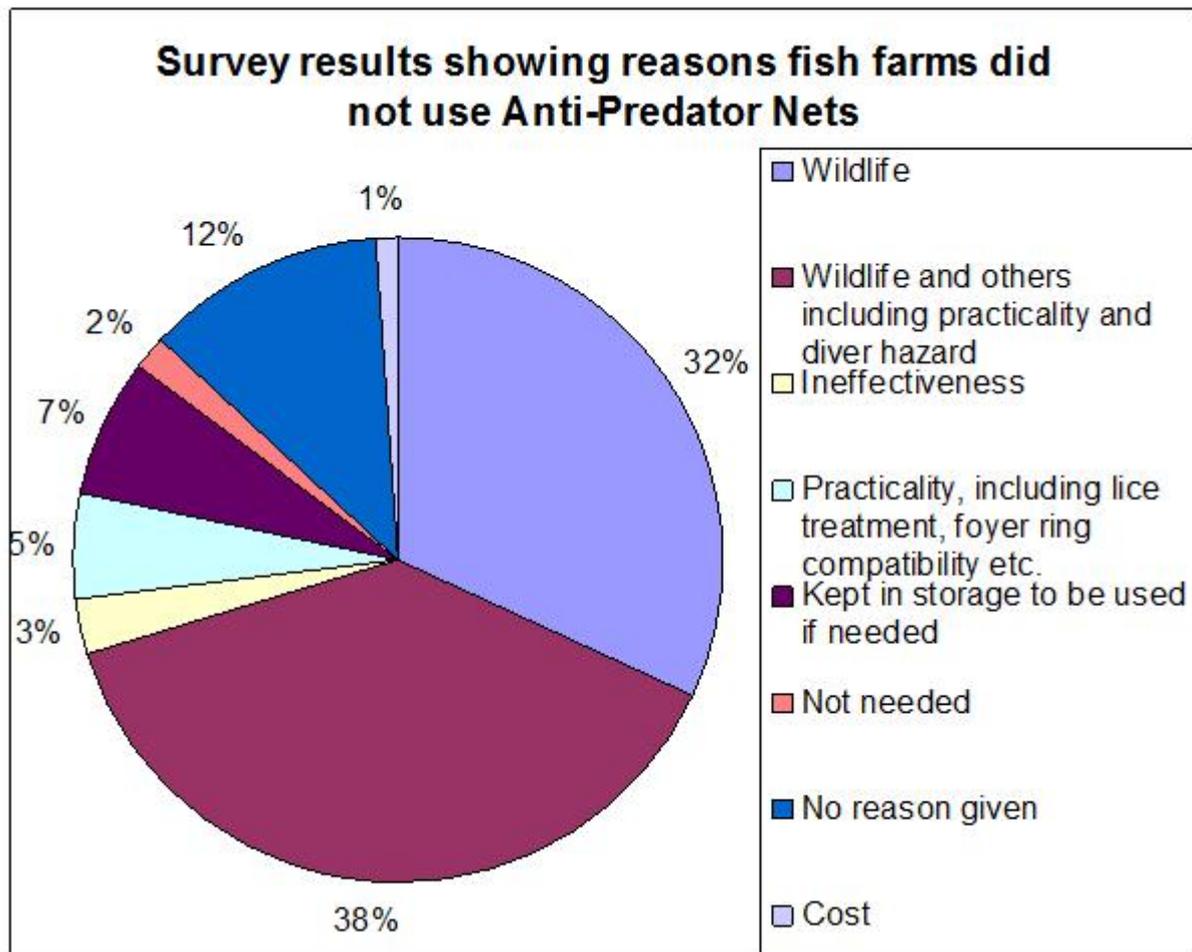
["Freedom Foods 'failing to crack down' on poor salmon farming standards"](#)

["RSPCA Freedom Food fish farmers killing seals"](#)

Please also note that a [Scottish Government survey in 2011/2012](#) revealed that 87% of salmon farms in Scotland do not even use predator nets - belying the salmon farming industry's claim that only shoot seals as a "last resort":

### 2011/12 Survey - Anti-Predator Nets

A total of 13% of fish farms actively use anti-predator nets and a further 7% have anti-predator nets in storage, making 20% in total (36 out of 175 responses). A number of reasons were offered for not using such nets but the most significant by far at 70% was related either solely or partly to possible impacts on wildlife. It should be noted that properly installed and maintained high-tension seal exclusion nets should not harm seals or other marine mammals. However this requires employing extra trained staff and regular net maintenance and cleaning which costs money and eats into profit margins.



Read more via ["Fish Farms in Shooting Seals Row"](#) and ["Scottish Salmon's Lethal Seal of Disapproval - 87% of farms fails to install predator exclusion nets"](#)

How many RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food certified salmon farms use predator nets?

Your stance in support of killing seals at salmon farms in Scotland seems completely out of kilter with the RSPCA's mandate of animal welfare. Why does the RSPCA rescue seals in Norfolk, [for example](#), when it is sponsoring their slaughter in Scotland?



And isn't it hypocritical in the extreme for the RSPCA to use [cute images of seals to raise money and raise your public profile](#) when you are promoting the killing of seals at salmon farms in Scotland?



Perhaps the RSPCA Board of Directors and management team at RSPCA Assured need a reminder of the real sordid story on seals?

Here's photos of dead seals killed near Marine Harvest's salmon farm in Loch Alsh:



Download high res image [online here](#)



Download image [online here](#)



Download high res image [online here](#)



Download image [online here](#)



Download image [online here](#)

Surely your founders Arthur Broome and William Wilberforce are turning in their graves at how the RSPCA has sacrificed its soul at the altar of trigger-happy salmon farming companies?

A reply by the **30 September 2015** would be much appreciated so we can avoid targeting your offices. If you are interested in issuing a joint statement publicising your commitment to ending the slaughter of seals at salmon farms please let me know.

If you choose to continue to sponsor seal slaughter across Scotland and have any security concerns regarding forthcoming protests please do not hesitate to contact me. GAAIA has a policy of peaceful protest and liaison with the police.

If we did dump bloody seal corpses in front of your offices then we would merely consider it a Good Samaritan act of returning lost property or a lost puppy. You could even use the corpses for education purposes and show visiting school children how RSPCA Assured/Freedom Food value the £££££s revenue from salmon farmers ahead of marine life in Scotland.

Please pass this letter onto your Board of Directors.

Yours sincerely,

Don Staniford

Director of the [Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture](#)

Contact details: [dstaniford@gaaia.org](mailto:dstaniford@gaaia.org)

Cc: Scottish Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

### **Appendix 1: Scottish Salmon's Serial Seal Killers**

A total of 74 salmon farms killed at least one seal in the period 2013-2014 (75 if you include the Scottish Salmon Company's salmon farm at Gometra, Isle of Mull, for January 2015).

According to the latest [Scottish Government annual survey of fish farms](#) there were 145 active salmon farms in 2013. In other words, over half of salmon farms in Scotland killed at least one seal.

A total of 33 salmon farms killed at least two seals in the period 2013-2014 (34 if you include the Gometra site for January 2015). In other words, almost a quarter (23%) of salmon farms in Scotland killed at least two seals.

#### **#1: East Voe Laxfirth, Shetland (Hjaltland/Grieg) - 24**

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East Voe Laxfirth, Lax Firth, Shetland (FS0333): 1 grey seal killed (7 August 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East Voe Laxfirth, Lax Firth, Shetland (FS0333): 3 grey seals killed (2 May and 23 & 30 July 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East Voe Laxfirth, Lax Firth, Shetland (FS0333): 8 grey seals killed (12 May; 2, 7, 15 & 26 June and 1, 6 & 14 July 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East Voe Laxfirth, Lax Firth, Shetland (FS0333): 1 common seal killed (29 April 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East Voe Laxfirth, Lax Firth, Shetland (FS0333): 11 grey seals killed (4, 10, 12, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25 & 27 February and 1 & 18 March 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

#### **#2: Veantrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 13**

Scottish Seafarms - Veantrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney (FS0860): 1 grey seal killed (23 January 2014); one carcass recovered (but not reported or collected)

Scottish Seafarms - Ventrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney (FS0860): 3 grey seals killed (2 & 5 December 2013); 3 carcasses recovered (but zero reported or collected)

Scottish Seafarms - Veantrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney (FS0860): 4 grey seals killed (27 March & 4 April 2013); zero carcasses recovered or collected but 4 reported

Scottish Seafarms - Veantrow Bay, Shapinsay, Orkney: 5 grey seals killed (14 February, 4 March, 28 March & 1 April 2014); 5 carcasses recovered but zero reported or collected

**#3: West of Balta Island, Shetland (Balta Island Seafare): 7**

Balta Island Seafare - West of Balta Island, Shetland (FS0717): 2 grey seals killed (9 August 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Balta Island Seafare - West of Balta Island, Shetland (FS0717): 1 grey seal killed (27 May 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Balta Island Seafare - West of Balta Island, Shetland (FS0717): 2 grey seals killed (13 & 28 November 2013); 1 carcass recovered (but not reported or collected)

Balta Island Seafare - West of Balta Island, Baltasound, Shetland (FS0717): 2 grey seals killed (7 & 27 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#4 =: South Voe of Gletness, Shetland (Hjaltland/Grieg): 6**

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - South Voe of Gletness, Shetland (FS1099): 6 grey seals killed (3, 8, 14, 18, 19 & 23 February 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#4=: Bellister, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 6**

Scottish Seafarms - Bight of Bellister, Shetland (FS1121): 1 grey seal killed (17 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Bellister, Dury Voe, Shetland: 3 grey seals killed (8 & 30 May and 6 June 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Bight of Bellister, Shetland: 1 grey seal killed (15 May 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Bellister, Dury Voe, Shetland; 1 grey seal killed (8 April 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#6 =: Gometra, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Salmon Company): 5\***

Scottish Salmon Company - Gometra, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute: 3 grey seals killed (20 & 27 January 2015); 3 carcasses reported but zero carcasses recovered or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Gometra, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute: 2 common seals killed (20 & 27 January 2015); 2 carcasses reported but zero carcasses recovered or collected

**#6 =: Loura Voe, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 5**

Scottish Seafarms - Loura Voe, Dury Voe, Shetland: 1 common seal killed (18 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Loura Voe, Dury Voe, Shetland: 2 grey seals killed (11 & 16 October 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Loura Voe, Dury Voe, Shetland: 2 grey seals killed (30 August & 19 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#6 =: Taranaish, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis (Scottish Salmon Company): 5**

Scottish Salmon Company - Taranaish, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 2 grey seals killed (20 March & 2 April 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Taranaish, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 1 grey seal killed (12 December 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Taranaish, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 2 grey seals killed (3 & 5 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#6 =: West Voe, Shetland (Bound Skerries Seafood): 5**

Bound Skerries Seafood - West Voe, Shetland (FS0310): 1 grey seal killed (18 November 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Bound Skerries Seafood - West Voe, Shetland (FS0310): 1 grey seal killed (18 September 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Bound Skerries Seafoods - West Voe, Shetland (FS/0310): 1 grey seal killed (30 December 2013); zero carcass recovered ("too remote" listed as reason), reported or collected

Bound Skerries Seafood - West Voe, Shetland (FS0310): 2 grey seals killed (26 August & 10 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected ("too remote" listed as reason not to report)

**#10 =: Grunna Voe, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 4**

Scottish Seafarms - Grunna Voe, Shetland: 1 grey seal killed (18 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Grunna Voe, Dury Voe, Shetland: 2 common seals killed (10 & 14 January 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Grunna Voe, Shetland; 1 grey seal killed (8 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#10 =: Ardchattan Bay, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (Dawnfresh): 4**

Dawnfresh - Ardchattan Bay, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (FS0197): 1 common seal killed (22 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Dawnfresh - Ardchattan Bay, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute - 2 common seals killed (5 November & 4 December 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Dawnfresh - Ardchattan Bay, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (FS0197): 1 common seal killed (8 July 2013); 1 carcass recovered but zero reported or collected

**#10 =: Toyness, Scapa Flow, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 4**

Scottish Seafarms - Toyness, Scapa Flow, Orkney (FS1024): 2 grey seals killed (5 & 13 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered or collected but 2 reported

Scottish Seafarms - Toyness, Scapa Flow, Orkney (FS1024): 2 grey seals killed (25 March & 13 April 2013); zero carcasses recovered or collected but 2 reported

**#13 =: Rubha Stillig, Loch Fyne, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Salmon Company): 3**

Scottish Salmon Company - Rubha Stillig, Loch Fyne, Argyll & Bute: 3 common seals killed (26 November 2014); zero carcasses recovered or collected but 3 reported

**#13 =: Trilleachan Mor, Loch Seaforth, Isle of Harris/Lewis (Scottish Salmon Company): 3**

Scottish Salmon Company - Trilleachan Mor, Loch Seaforth, Isle of Harris/Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 1 common seal killed (19 September 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Trilleachan Mor, Loch Seaforth, Isle of Harris/Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 2 grey seals killed (30 May 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#13 =: Kishorn B, Loch Kishorn, Highland (Scottish Seafarms): 3**

Scottish Seafarms - Kishorn B, Loch Kishorn, Highland (FS0804): 1 common seal killed (29 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Kishorn B, Loch Kishorn, Highland (FS804): 1 common seal killed (11 March 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Kishorn B, Loch Kishorn, Highland (FS0804): 1 common seal killed (30 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#13 =: Corry, Loch Broom, Highland (Wester Ross Fisheries): 3**

Wester Ross Fisheries/North & West Salmon Management Group - Corry, Loch Broom, Highland (FS/0057): 1 grey seal killed (6 August 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Wester Ross Fisheries/North & West Salmon Management Group - Corry, Loch Broom, Highland (FS/0057): 1 common seal killed (27 February 2014) and 1 grey seal killed (20 February 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Grey Horse Channel, Cheesebay, North Uist (Marine Harvest): 2**

Marine Harvest - Grey Horse Channel, Cheesebay, North Uist, Outer Hebrides (FS1122); 1 grey seal killed (22 July 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Grey Horse Channel, Cheesebay, North Uist, Outer Hebrides (FS1122); 1 grey seal killed (23 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Isle Ewe, Loch Ewe, Highland (Marine Harvest): 2**

Marine Harvest - Isle Ewe, Loch Ewe, Highland (FS1084); 1 common seal killed (10 November 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Isle Ewe, Loch Ewe, Highland (FS1084); 1 grey seal killed (3 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Bring Head, Scapa Flow, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 2**

Scottish Seafarms - Bring Head, Scapa Flow, Orkney (FS1023): 1 grey seal killed (19 July 2013); zero carcass recovered or collected but 1 reported

Scottish Seafarms - Bring Head, Scapa Flow, Orkney (FS1023): 1 grey seal killed (22 February 2013); zero carcass recovered or collected but 1 reported

**#17 =: Scallastle Bay, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Seafarms): 2**

Scottish Seafarms - Scallastle Bay, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (FS0209): 1 common seal killed (4 February 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Scallastle Bay, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (FS0209): 1 common seal killed (29 January 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Cloudin, Vaila Sound, Shetland (Meridian/Cooke): 2**

Meridian/Cooke - Cloudin, Vaila Sound, Shetland (FS0088): 2 grey seals killed (18 April 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Quanterness, Bay of Kirkwall, Orkney (Meridian/Cooke): 2**

Meridian/Cooke - Quanterness, Bay of Kirkwall, Orkney (FS0908): 2 grey seals killed (15 & 16 April 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Cat Firth, Shetland (Hjaltland/Grieg): 2**

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - Cat Firth, Shetland (FS0501): 2 grey seals killed (21 February & 3 March 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Loch Carnan, South Uist (Loch Duart): 2**

Loch Duart - Loch Carnan, South Uist, Outer Hebrides: 2 grey seals killed (20 September 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Vidlin, Shetland (Scottish Seafarms): 2**

Scottish Seafarms - Vidlin, Shetland: 2 grey seals killed (18 September & 3 October 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Baltasound Pier, Shetland (Balta Island Seafare): 2**

Balta Island Seafare - Baltasound Pier, Shetland (FS1102): 2 grey seals killed (4 April 2014); 2 carcasses recovered and reported but zero collected

**#17 =: Puldrite Bay, Orkney (Scottish Seafarms): 2**

Scottish Seafarms - Puldrite Bay, Orkney: 2 grey seals killed (4 December 2013); 2 carcasses recovered (but zero reported or collected)

**#17 =: Hamnavoe, Shetland (Meridian/Cooke): 2**

Meridian/Cooke - Hamnavoe, Shetland (FS/1043): 2 common seals killed (27 January 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Lochmadday, North Uist (Loch Duart): 2**

Loch Duart - Lochmaddy, North Uist, Outer Hebrides: 2 grey seals killed (29 November & 13 December 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Outer Eport, North Uist (Scottish Salmon Company): 2**

Scottish Salmon Company - Outer Eport, North Uist, Outer Hebrides: 1 grey seal killed (6 November 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Outer Eport, North Uist, Outer Hebrides: 1 grey seal killed (2 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Geasgill, Loch Na Keal, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Salmon Company): 2**

Scottish Salmon Company - Geasgill, Loch Na Keal, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute: 1 common seal killed and 1 grey seal killed (11 & 22 March 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Druimyeon Bay, Sound of Gigha, Argyll & Bute (Scottish Salmon Company): 2**

Scottish Salmon Company - Druimyeon Bay, Sound of Gigha, Argyll & Bute: 1 unidentified seal killed (12 December 2014); zero carcass recovered or collected but 1 reported

Scottish Salmon Company - Druimyeon Bay, Sound of Gigha, Argyll & Bute: 1 grey seal killed (13 January 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Inverawe East, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (Dawnfresh): 2**

Dawnfresh - Inverawe East, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (FS1067): 1 common seal killed (6 June 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Dawnfresh - Inverawe East, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (FS1067): 1 common seal killed (15 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

**#17 =: Stringa Voe, Shetland (Bound Skerries Seafood): 2**

Bound Skerries Seafood - Stringa Voe, Shetland (FS0439): 1 grey seal killed (30 October 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Bound Skerries Seafood - Stringa Voe, Shetland (FS0439): 1 grey seal killed (11 September 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected ("too remote" listed as reason not to report)

\* Some data for January 2015 was made available by the Scottish Government. GAAIA filed a FOI request on 24 August 2015 requesting all seal-killing data for 2015 (a reply is expected in late September 2015).

**Another 41 sites killed one seal (2013-2014):**

Marine Harvest - Invasion Bay, Loch Sunart, Highland (FS0212): 1 grey seal killed (18 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - North Voe, Whalsay, Shetland (FS0946): 1 grey seal killed (15 December 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Lismore West, Loch Linnhe, Argyll & Bute (FS0914): 1 common seal killed (5 November 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Holms, Shetland: 1 grey seal killed (30 October 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Slocks, Ronas Voe, Shetland: 1 grey seal killed (17 October 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Loch Leven (1), Loch Leven, Highland (FS1084); 1 common seal killed (13 October 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Torridon, Loch Torridon, Highland (FS0234); 1 common seal killed (24 September 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Dawnfresh - Etive 4, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute (FS1112): 1 common seal killed (6 June 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Meridian Salmon Farms - ??????? (FS/0624): 1 grey seal killed (6 May 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Spelve B, Loch Spelve, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (FS0253): 1 common seal killed (25 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Balta Island Seafare - Baltasound, Shetland (FS0449): 1 grey seal killed (4 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Loch Creran D, Loch Creran, Argyll & Bute (FS1047): 1 common seal killed (4 April 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - Linga, Setterness, Shetland (FS1027): 1 grey seal killed (26 March 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Loch Duart/North & West Salmon Management Group - Loch A Chairn Bain, Highland (FS/0621): 1 grey seal killed (20 March 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Tanera, Summer Isles, Highland (FS0549): 1 common seal killed and 1 grey seal killed (13 & 16 March 2014); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Dury Voe, Shetland (FS0033): 1 grey seal killed (10 March 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Loch Duart/North & West Salmon Management Group - Sound of Harris, Outer Hebrides; 1 grey seal killed (4 March 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Loch Duart/North & West Salmon Management Group - Outer Bay, Loch Droigniche, Highland (FS/0671): 1 common seal killed (28 February 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Loch Duart/North & West Salmon Management Group - Calva Bay, Highland (FS/0068): 1 grey seal killed (26 February 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Spelve A, Loch Spelve, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute (FS0634): 1 common seal killed (20 February 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Mangester, Mangester Voe, Shetland: 1 grey seal killed (21 January 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Ardcastle, Loch Fyne, Argyll & Bute: 1 grey seal killed (15 January 2014); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - Swinning Voe, Shetland (FS/0377): 1 common seal killed (8 November 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Nevis B, Loch Nevis, Highland (FS0616): 1 common seal killed (22 October 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Creag an T'Sagairt, Loch Hourn, Highland (FS0605): 1 common seal killed (16 October 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Cairidh, Loch Ainort, Isle of Skye, Highland (FS0605): 1 common seal killed (26 September 2013) and 1 grey seal killed (6 September 2013); zero carcasses recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - North Havra, Shetland (FS0674): 1 grey seal killed (27 September 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Loch Harport, Isle of Skye, Highland (FS0247): 1 common seal killed (25 September 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Dawnfresh - Etive 3, Port Na Mine, Loch Etive, Argyll & Bute: 1 common seal killed (18 September 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Portree, Isle of Skye, Highland: 1 common seal killed (17 September 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Eughlam, Loch Roag, Isle of Lewis, Outer Hebrides: 1 grey seal killed (6 August 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Plocrapol, Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides: 1 common seal killed (25 April 2013); zero carcass recovered and collected but 1 reported

Meridian/Cooke - Papa Westray, Orkney (FS1210): 1 grey seal killed (1 April 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Crooie, Clift Sound, Shetland; 1 grey seal killed (29 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Tuath, Loch Tuath, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute: 1 grey seal killed (28 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Kames Fish Farming - Eilean Coltair, Loch Melfort, Argyll & Bute (FS0777): 1 common seal killed (20 March 2013); 1 carcass recovered, reported and collected

Meridian/Cooke - Meil Bay, Orkney (FS0597): 1 grey seal killed (5 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Salmon Company - Inchkenneth, Loch Na Keal, Isle of Mull, Argyll & Bute: 1 common seal killed (5 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Puldrite Bay, Orkney (FS0813): 1 grey seal killed (19 February 2013); zero carcass recovered or collected but 1 reported

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - Punds Voe, Shetland (FS0446): 1 grey seal killed (13 March 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Hjaltland Seafarms/Grieg Seafood - East of Papa, Shetland (FS447): 1 grey seal killed (19 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Marine Harvest - Sconser, Isle of Skye, Highland: 1 common seal killed (15 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Holms Geo, Clift Sound, Shetland; 1 grey seal killed (11 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

Scottish Seafarms - Crying Taing and Pobie Suka, Ronas Voe, Shetland; 1 grey seal killed (6 February 2013); zero carcass recovered, reported or collected

## **Appendix 2: Previous correspondence with the RSPCA/Freedom Food**

**From:** Don Staniford [mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com]

**Sent:** 05 February 2015 07:45

**To:** 'Clive Brazier'

**Subject:** RE: # Seals Killed at RSPCA/Freedom Food certified salmon farms in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Clive,

If you re-consider your position please do pass on the information requested.

For the record, when GAAIA speaks publicly about this issue (we are preparing a press release) are you happy with this statement?

"When asked for a list of RSPCA/Freedom Food-certified salmon farms, Freedom Food's General Manager refused to provide site specific details. When asked for annual figures of the numbers of seals killed by RSPCA/Freedom Food-certified salmon farms, Freedom Food's General Manager refused to provide site specific details."

If you would like to suggest any changes or provide more specific details please do so.

Please also pass this email onto the Freedom Food team/board and the relevant RSPCA contacts.

Best fishes,

Don

Don Staniford

Director, Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA):  
<http://www.salmonfarmingkills.com>

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**From:** Clive Brazier [<mailto:clive.brazier@freedomfood.co.uk>]

**Sent:** 04 February 2015 12:47

**To:** Don Staniford

**Subject:** Re: # Seals Killed at RSPCA/Freedom Food certified salmon farms in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

Dear Don,

Thank you for your email.

We are one hundred percent committed to improving the welfare of both seals and salmon. The issue of culling seals - as a last resort to protect the welfare of farmed salmon - is a welfare dilemma and we share your concerns.

Whilst we do not yet have the answer, to what is a very complex issue, please be assured that we are working with the salmon farming industry and the Salmon, Aquaculture and Seals Working Group to find further ways to reduce the number of seals that are shot.

As stated previously, numbers have already been reducing but the killing of one seal is still one too many and we want to get this figure to zero.

We fully respect your cause but are unable to help any further with your enquiries at this time.

Kind regards

Clive Brazier

Clive Brazier

General Manager 07584021599 [www.freedomfood.co.uk](http://www.freedomfood.co.uk)

On 31 January 2015 at 11:22, Don Staniford <[salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com](mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com)> wrote:

Dear Clive,

I'm surprised that your Freedom Food accredited salmon farmers would not be more than willing to have you let the world know they have achieved such a high welfare standard for

their farms. Can you tell me what part of the Data Protection Act forbids you from making that information public?

On the subject of seals shot as a "last resort" by Freedom Food accredited farmers I should make it clear that I don't want to know what farms did the shooting, just an overall number for seals shot at Freedom Food accredited salmon farms.

Surely you can release specific figures especially since the RSPCA's former director Gavin Grant gave specific figures?

Please note that Gavin's email of 12 July 2012 stated: "In 2008, 460 seals were shot at Freedom Food farms. This was totally unacceptable and led to our standards being re-written. In 2010 the number declined to 52, a reduction of 90 per cent. In 2011, this figure was further reduced to 46" (although the figure for 46 dead seals in 2011 was upgraded to 61 during a Radio 4 broadcast on 18 October 2012: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01nbqzc>).

Your email claims that "The number of seals shot on our farms, as a last resort, has significantly reduced over the last seven years and continues to do so year on year".

So, if I understand you correctly, the number of seals killed on Freedom Food salmon farms in 2012 was less than 61 and in 2013 was less than 60 and in 2014 was less than 59?

I totally agree with you that the killing of one seal is still one too many but it seems that Freedom Food salmon farms are still killing dozens of seals (even if you're being charitable - and assuming that Freedom Food certifies 120 salmon farms - that's one dead seal for every second Freedom Food farm). Can you tell me how the RSPCA is working towards getting this figure down to zero and how far you are away from zero?

Finally, in terms of defining "last resort" how can Freedom Food justify the shooting of seals if predator nets are not installed (i.e. how does a salmon farm not using predator nets constitute "last resort")?



Approximately 70 per cent of farmed Scottish Salmon is produced under Freedom Food. You will appreciate that due to data protection, we are unable to provide you with a list of Freedom Food approved salmon members.

The number of seals shot on our farms, as a last resort, has significantly reduced over the last seven years and continues to do so year on year. We are unable to disclose the figures as they are submitted to us by our members, in confidence, for the benefit of developing the scheme.

Of course the killing of one seal is still one too many and we are working towards getting this figure down to zero.

Kind regards

Clive Brazier

General Manager [www.freedomfood.co.uk](http://www.freedomfood.co.uk)

Freedom Food is the RSPCA's farm assurance and food labelling scheme dedicated to farm animal welfare.

[www.freedomfood.co.uk](http://www.freedomfood.co.uk)

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Charity registered in England & Wales) 1059879 and Scotland SCO38199.

Registered office: RSPCA, Wilberforce Way, Southwater,

Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 9RS. VAT Reg.no. 602 7676 42

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**From:** Don Staniford [mailto:[salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com](mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com)]

**Sent:** 16 January 2015 15:12

**To:** '[farm\\_animals@rspca.org.uk](mailto:farm_animals@rspca.org.uk)'; '[wildlife@rspca.org.uk](mailto:wildlife@rspca.org.uk)'; '[Bob.waller@btconnect.com](mailto:Bob.waller@btconnect.com)'; '[lgrant@freedomfood.co.uk](mailto:lgrant@freedomfood.co.uk)'

**Cc:** '[helen.coen@freedomfood.co.uk](mailto:helen.coen@freedomfood.co.uk)'

**Subject:** # Seals Killed at RSPCA/Freedom Food certified salmon farms in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014

**Importance:** High

Further to my email yesterday to Helen (enclosed below), how many seals have been killed at RSPCA/Freedom Food-certified salmon farms since 2012 (please provide an annual breakdown for 2012, 2013 and 2014)?

I understand that the RSPCA/Freedom Food farmed salmon standard permits the killing of seals as a "last resort" (RSPCA welfare standards for farmed Atlantic Salmon, p.19, July 2010) - a policy similar to the Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation's Code of Good Practice.

Please note that the RSPCA's former director (Gavin Grant) stated in an email to GAAIA (12 July 2012) - see enclosed below:

"I can confirm that:

The RSPCA and Freedom Food have taken the lead, with other stakeholders, to focus on this issue with the aim of eliminating such seal deaths. Farmers have a responsibility to protect the health and welfare of farmed fish under The Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. In 2008, 460 seals were shot at Freedom Food farms. This was totally unacceptable and led to our standards being re-written. In 2010 the number declined to 52, a reduction of 90 per cent. In 2011, this figure was further reduced to 46. At the same time the number of fish covered by those farms rose from 27 million in 2010 to 93 million in 2011; a 350 per cent fold increase. Clearly the RSPCA has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of both fish and seals. As a result, Freedom Food farms can only use lethal control as a last resort and other mitigation techniques must be used first.

Freedom Food represents 65 per cent of the industry and it is hoped that in the future this figure will rise to 100 per cent. The number of licences issued is a matter for the Scottish

Government but in 2011 at least 32 per cent of licensees did not kill any seals. The Scottish Government reported that a total of 242 seals were shot across 235 individual fish farms and 219 across over 40 river fisheries and netting stations. The impact of the higher welfare standards on Freedom Food farms is clear, as despite representing 65 per cent of the salmon farms, the loss of seals stood at 10 per cent of the total reported.

Our data for 2012 is incomplete as we only collate these figures on an annual basis."

[Note that the figure for 46 dead seals in 2011 was upgraded to 61 during a Radio 4 broadcast on 18 October 2012: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01nbqzc>]

An update on 2012, 2013 and 2014 data would therefore be much appreciated.

Could you please provide a list of all RSPCA/Freedom Food-certified salmon farms in Scotland?

I understand that ca. 70% of Scottish salmon farms are now certified by the RSPCA/Freedom Food (rising to perhaps 80% this year). Since there's around 200 active salmon farms in Scotland then I am guessing that there are around 140-150 RSPCA/Freedom Food salmon farms.

For example, these two specific sites (producing farmed salmon sold by Sainsbury's) are RSPCA/Freedom Food-certified:



Serving suggestion



Sainsbury's  
**Taste** *the*  
**Difference**

**OAK SMOKED  
SCOTTISH SALMON**  
Responsibly sourced



1/2 of a pack

ENERGY	FAT	PROTEIN	COLESTEROL	SALT
481kJ 114kcal	6.7g	1.4g	0.3g	1.00g
6%	10%	7%	1%	20%

% of the Reference Intakes



Were seals killed at these sites during 2014?

I also re-enclose correspondence from 2012 on this same issue.

Best fishes,

Don

Don Staniford

Director, Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA):  
<http://www.salmonfarmingkills.com>

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**From:** Don Staniford [<mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** 15 January 2015 19:59  
**To:** '[helen.coen@freedomfood.co.uk](mailto:helen.coen@freedomfood.co.uk)'  
**Subject:** FW: Request for "new evidence" re. seal killing in Scotland & threats to public safety  
**Importance:** High

Helen,

Please forward to the Freedom Food person working on salmon farms and seals.

I copied the RSPCA into this too.

I also have two questions for Freedom Food:



Please note new information from Marine Scotland which shows that only 13% of Scottish salmon farms have installed anti-predator nets (see below).

Since “more than 60 per cent of Scottish farmed salmon now has the RSPCA’s Freedom Foods accreditation” this means that the majority of RSPCA-certified salmon farms do NOT have anti-predator nets installed.

How many RSPCA-certified salmon farms do not have anti-predator nets installed?

Why is the RSPCA certifying salmon farms without anti-predator nets and permitting salmon farmers to kill seals as a first not last resort?

Thanks,

Don

**Save Our Seals Fund & GAAIA, 16 September 2012**

### **[Scottish Salmon’s Lethal Seal of Disapproval](#)**

**- 87% of farms fail to install predator exclusion nets**

Exclusive figures forced from the Scottish Government under Freedom of Information laws reveal that only 13% of Scottish salmon farms use seal exclusion nets. The 2011/12 survey has just been released by Marine Scotland following an appeal over the refusal of an earlier Freedom of Information request. The survey shows that although 20% of salmon farms have these vital anti-predator nets only 13% of farms use them [1].

Read the Sunday Times article "[Fish Farms in Shooting Seals Row](#)" (16 September 2012)

“These damning figures blow the industry’s claim that seals are only shot as a ‘last resort’ out of the water,” said Don Staniford of the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA). “The bloody truth is that 4 out of 5 salmon farms do not even have predator nets and are killing seals unnecessarily. Consumers have blood on their hands when buying Scottish farmed salmon – even RSPCA-certified ‘Freedom Food’ salmon.”

Following Marine Scotland’s refusal to name the companies, GAAIA has now filed an appeal with the Scottish Information Commissioner [2]. GAAIA has [forwarded](#) this damning new information to the US Government demanding that imports of Scottish farmed salmon be banned due to a blatant breach of the US Marine Mammal Protection Act.

“When you buy Scottish salmon you pay for bullets to shoot seals,” said John Robins, Secretary to the Save Our Seals Fund. “It is ludicrous and shameful that the Scottish Government is freely issuing licences to allow salmon farmers to kill seals when, by the Governments’ own admission, the vast majority of these floating factory fish farms do not use proper anti-predator nets. When the Scottish Government and RSPCA Freedom Foods claim that seals are only shot as a ‘last resort’ they are lying. They are lying to the public and colluding with the salmon farmers in the killing of seals in Scottish waters. The Scottish Government and RSPCA Freedom Foods should insist that salmon farmers deploy and maintain proper seal exclusion nets.”

Paul Wheelhouse, the new Environment Minister at the Scottish Government, [claimed](#) earlier this month: “More than 60 per cent of Scottish farmed salmon now has the RSPCA’s Freedom Foods accreditation.” Despite failing to install predator nets at 87% of farms, the Scottish Salmon Producers’ Organisation [claims](#): “More than 90% of Scottish salmon will be farmed to RSPCA Freedom Food welfare standards within the next two years”.

In June, FOI data from the Scottish Government [revealed](#) that over 300 seals were killed during 2011 and 2012 (up to April) by Scottish salmon farmers including Marine Harvest, Loch Duart, Scottish Sea Farms, Meridian, Hjalmland Seafarms and The Scottish Salmon Company.

For more information read the ‘[Killing Farms](#)’ and ‘[Killer Panda](#)’

**Contacts:**

John Robins, Save Our Seals Fund (SOSF) & Animal Concern: [+44 \(0\)1389-841111](tel:+441389841111) and [+44 \(0\)7721-605521](tel:+4417721605521)

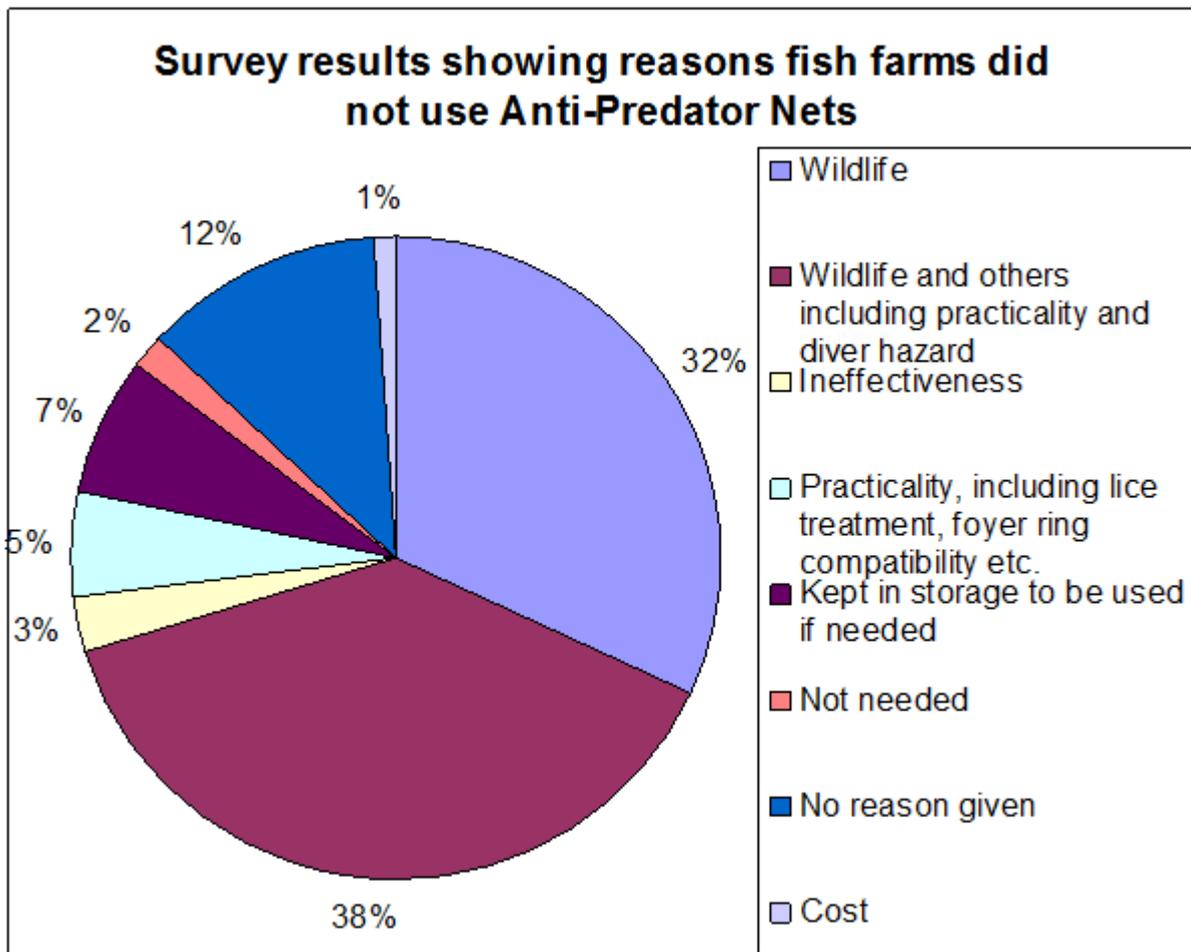
Don Staniford, Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA):  
[dstaniford@gaaia.org](mailto:dstaniford@gaaia.org)

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

[1] Marine Scotland (a Scottish Government Department) reply of 10 September 2012 to a FOI request by GAAIA for data on the number of predator nets on Scottish salmon farms. Prior to this, information circulated by the Government and given in at least one written answer to a parliamentary question (Government Minister Richard Lochhead on Friday, March 04, 2011) misled the public by suggesting that 20% of salmon farms actually used predator exclusion nets.

### **2011/12 Survey - Anti-Predator Nets**

A total of 13% of fish farms actively use anti-predator nets and a further 7% have anti-predator nets in storage, making 20% in total (36 out of 175 responses). A number of reasons were offered for not using such nets but the most significant by far at 70% was related either solely or partly to possible impacts on wildlife. It should be noted that properly installed and maintained high-tension seal exclusion nets should not harm seals or other marine mammals. However this requires employing extra trained staff and regular net maintenance and cleaning which costs money and eats into profit margins.



Download FOI reply from Marine Scotland [online here](#)

[2] Read the FOI correspondence with Marine Scotland and appeal to the Scottish Information Commissioner [online here](#)

Online via: <http://salmonfarmingkills.com/killing-farms>

Read the Sunday Times article "[Fish Farms in Shooting Seals Row](#)" (16 September 2012)



**From:** Enqserv Enqserv [<mailto:Enqserv@rspca.org.uk>]  
**Sent:** 12 July 2012 10:39  
**To:** [salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com](mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** Seals and salmon farming

Dear Don,

As promised in my previous communication, please find below a full response to your concerns on seal deaths on or around salmon farms operated under the Freedom Food assurance scheme.

The RSPCA shares your vision that no seals will be killed to protect farmed salmon stocks and we will continue to aim for that target. In the meantime we will continue to work with the industry to provide the very highest standards to which salmon should be reared. By doing this we improve the welfare of many millions of fish and have, over the years, forced a significant reduction in the loss of seals.

I can confirm that:

The RSPCA and Freedom Food have taken the lead, with other stakeholders, to focus on this issue with the aim of eliminating such seal deaths. Farmers have a responsibility to protect the health and welfare of farmed fish under The Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) Act 2006. In 2008, 460 seals were shot at Freedom Food farms. This was totally unacceptable and led to our standards being re-written. In 2010 the number declined to 52, a reduction of 90 per cent. In 2011, this figure was further reduced to 46. At the same time the number of fish covered by those farms rose from 27 million in 2010 to 93 million in 2011; a 350 per cent fold increase. Clearly the RSPCA has a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of both fish and seals. As a result, Freedom Food farms can only use lethal control as a last resort and other mitigation techniques must be used first.

Freedom Food represents 65 per cent of the industry and it is hoped that in the future this figure will rise to 100 per cent. The number of licences issued is a matter for the Scottish Government but in 2011 at least 32 per cent of licensees did not kill any seals. The Scottish Government reported that a total of 242 seals were shot across 235 individual fish farms and 219 across over 40 river fisheries and netting stations. The impact of the higher welfare standards on Freedom Food farms is clear, as despite representing 65 per cent of the salmon farms, the loss of seals stood at 10 per cent of the total reported.

Our data for 2012 is incomplete as we only collate these figures on an annual basis.

In 2011, the Shetland News reported that only 20 per cent of Scottish salmon farms have predator nets. This opinion piece is misleading and inaccurate as the data used was more than 10 years old. The survey was carried out by Nicola Quick and her colleagues in 2001 and published in the peer-reviewed journal Aquaculture in 2004. The survey said that 97 per cent of respondents had some level of anti-predator control, with 88 per cent deploying top nets as the most common type. Currently, most if not all salmon farms deploy tension nets, reducing the need for other types of anti-predator control. As predator exclusion nets can actually cause injury to seals in some circumstances, tension nets are preferable.

Should you require any further information please contact Dr Andrew Kelly in the Wildlife Department ([wildlife@rspca.org.uk](mailto:wildlife@rspca.org.uk)) or John Avizienius in the Farm Animals Department ([farm\\_animals@rspca.org.uk](mailto:farm_animals@rspca.org.uk)).

Best wishes

Gavin

Want to raise money for the RSPCA every time you talk? Rabbit on with RSPCA Mobile!  
<http://www.rspcamobile.co.uk/> -----

----- Royal Society for the  
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals registered charity no: 219099 Registered office: RSPCA,  
Wilberforce Way, Southwater, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 9RS -----

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**From:** Don Staniford [<mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>]

**Sent:** 03 July 2012 06:41

**To:** 'Gavin Grant'

**Subject:** RE: Seals and salmon farming

Gavin,

Thanks for your response - without firing off I would suggest that you check your facts. I know it is a gut reaction to be sensitive to the phrase "RSPCA-sponsored seal killing" but that's a fact. 90% of Scottish salmon farms will soon be certified by the RSPCA (it is currently 60%) and it is SSPO policy to kill seals – and the ['RSPCA Welfare Standards for Farmed Salmon'](#) specifically endorses the killing of seals.

As I stated, in view of the fact that over 300 seals have been killed by Scottish salmon farmers in the last 18 months and the fact that 60% of Scottish salmon farms are currently certified by the RSPCA, the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA) estimates the number of [RSPCA-sponsored](#) seal killings at over 150 seals. Moreover, the RSPCA-sponsored killing of seals is set to increase even further. According to the [Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation](#), “more than 90% of Scottish salmon will be farmed to RSPCA Freedom Food welfare standards within the next two years.”

Please tell me how this guesstimate is not based on sound logic? How is it "wildly inaccurate"? Are you seriously suggesting that the 300+ seals are shot at the 40% of salmon farms sites not certified by the RSPCA? The RSPCA has the records and can answer the question once and for all but has consistently refused to provide basic information on salmon farming issues.

You should be aware that I have raised issues with the RSPCA for over a decade – just ask Bob and John and you should be able to track down previous correspondence on this issue. The RSPCA has sadly let seals down as an organization and I stand by my personal view that the RSPCA should be ashamed of itself. Hopefully you can finally do the right thing and put an end to the killing of seals.

I understand your sensitivity but the RSPCA-certified companies including [Loch Duart](#), [Scottish Salmon Company](#), [Hjaltland Seafarms](#), [Marine Harvest](#), [Meridian](#) and [Scottish Seafarms](#) are serial seal killers. That is not in doubt. These are companies which kill seals more as a first not last resort and are corrupting the definition of last resort. As I stated: “A government survey showed that 80 per cent of salmon farms in Scotland do not have anti predator nets,” reported the [Shetland News](#) in March 2011.



Thank-you for your e-mail and attached letter. I note it's contents and questions. Having organised the RSPCA's emergency response to the epidemic that ravaged our island's seal population more than 20 years ago, seal welfare is a matter of great interest to me personally. You will receive a full response on this important issue.

Meanwhile I would be grateful if you and your organisation cease using such utterly inappropriate terms as "RSPCA sponsored seals killed" and "how much blood does the RSPCA have on its hands". These statements have no place in such an important matter and discussion between people committed to the well-being of creatures with whom we have the privilege of sharing our world. Indeed such sentiments are usually found on internet "hate sites" of those successfully prosecuted by the RSPCA for animal abuse. Not company with which I suspect you would wish to be inadvertently associated?

May I also ask you not to assert such wildly inaccurate "guesstimates"? Again they have no place in these important issues of animal welfare. Such conduct also has the likelihood of reducing significantly the credibility of those that use it.

Best wishes

Gavin

**From:** Don Staniford [<mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** 02 July 2012 16:48  
**To:** '[ggrant@rspca.org.uk](mailto:ggrant@rspca.org.uk)'  
**Subject:** RSPCA-sponsored seals killed by salmon farmers?

Gavin,

Please find attached a letter including:

"Could you please provide details on the number of seals killed at salmon farms certified via the RSPCA's Freedom Food scheme?"

In view of the fact that over 300 seals have been killed by Scottish salmon farmers in the last 18 months and the fact that 60% of Scottish salmon farms are currently certified by the RSPCA, the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA) estimates the number of [RSPCA-sponsored](#) seal killings at over 150 seals.

Moreover, the RSPCA-sponsored killing of seals is set to increase even further. According to the [Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation](#), “more than 90% of Scottish salmon will be farmed to RSPCA Freedom Food welfare standards within the next two years.”

However, if you could provide accurate figures including the names of the companies and farms killing seals under the Freedom Food scheme it would be much appreciated.

Please note that RSPCA-certified companies including [Loch Duart](#), [Scottish Salmon Company](#), [Hjaltland Seafarms](#), [Marine Harvest](#), [Meridian](#) and [Scottish Seafarms](#) were named recently by Marine Scotland as serial seal killers. According to information supplied via [Freedom of Information](#), the mass murderers of over 200 Scottish seals during 2011 were as follows:

Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd – 50 seals killed

The Scottish Salmon Co Ltd – 45 seals killed

Scottish Seafarms Ltd – 37 seals killed

Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd – 34 seals killed

Northern Isles Salmon Ltd (Meridian group) – 22 seals killed

Lakeland Marine Farm Ltd – 17 seals killed

West Minch Salmon Ltd – 9 seals killed

Dawnfresh Farming Ltd – 6 seals killed

Loch Duart Ltd – 5 seals killed

Bound Skerries Seafoods Ltd – 4 seals killed

In 2012 (up to April), another 81 seals were killed by the following Scottish salmon farming companies (all but one if not every company is certified by the RSPCA):

The Scottish Salmon Company – 21 seals killed

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd – 17 seals killed

Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd – 15 seals killed

Meridian Salmon Group – 13 seals killed

Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd – 9 seals killed

Loch Duart Ltd – 5 seals killed

Dawnfresh Farming Ltd – 1 seals killed

Read the correspondence with the Scottish Government in full [online here](#)

The RSPCA's support for seal killing is nothing short of shameful. How can the RSPCA certify salmon farms as welfare-friendly under the Freedom Food scheme when seals are being shot as a first not last resort?

The '[RSPCA Welfare Standards for Farmed Salmon](#)' (2010) states that repeated shooting of seals will result in the site being suspended:

**HP 6.14 \*** The producer must be able to demonstrate to the Freedom Food Assessor or the RSPCA Farm Livestock Officer that all of the procedures leading up to the point of last resort have been mobilised.

-  The repeated shooting of seals without having deployed all of the measures leading to a last resort scenario, will result in the site being suspended from the scheme pending further investigation.

However, a Government survey found that only 20% of Scottish salmon farms even have predator nets. "A government survey showed that 80 per cent of salmon farms in Scotland do not have anti predator nets," reported the [Shetland News](#) in March 2011.

How many sites has the RSPCA actually suspended from the Freedom Food scheme?

Moreover, the number of seals killed by salmon farms in Scotland (over half of which are certified by the RSPCA) is increasing not decreasing. [Seal Scotland reported](#) last month that: "In the first year of the government's new seal licensing system they claim that 461 seals have been shot. The latest annual figures which cover the period from 31 January 2011 to 31 January 2012 can be found at [Licences & Returns: 2011](#). The government claims this is a success story - that these figures are far lower than the 3,000 seals that environmental groups had claimed were being killed each year. In fact a Freedom of Information request shows that the number of seals reported to the government as being shot over the three years before licences were introduced was 66, 34 and 10."

Read more background via "[Scotland's Seal Killers Named & Shamed!](#)"

How many of these seals were killed at RSPCA-certified salmon farms? Is the number of RSPCA-sponsored seals being killed increasing year after year?.....

.....In conclusion, if the RSPCA can divulge site specific details of the numbers of seals shot it would be much appreciated. How much blood does the RSCPA have on their hands?"

The letter is attached in full here.

Please pass onto the board members at the RSPCA and the staff members of the Freedom Food scheme.

Yours sincerely,

Don Staniford

[Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture](#)

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**From:** Don Staniford [<mailto:salmonfarmingkills@gmail.com>]  
**Sent:** 02 July 2012 15:28  
**To:** '[Info@freedomfood.co.uk](mailto:Info@freedomfood.co.uk)'  
**Cc:** '[Bob.waller@btconnect.com](mailto:Bob.waller@btconnect.com)'; '[javizienius@rspca.org.uk](mailto:javizienius@rspca.org.uk)'  
**Subject:** RSPCA-sponsored seals killed by salmon farmers?

Please find attached a letter including:

"Could you please provide details on the number of seals killed at salmon farms certified via the RSPCA's Freedom Food scheme?"

In view of the fact that over 300 seals have been killed by Scottish salmon farmers in the last 18 months and the fact that 60% of Scottish salmon farms are currently certified by the RSPCA, the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture (GAAIA) estimates the number of [RSPCA-sponsored](#) seal killings at over 150 seals.

Moreover, the RSPCA-sponsored killing of seals is set to increase even further. According to the [Scottish Salmon Producers' Organisation](#), "more than 90% of Scottish salmon will be farmed to RSPCA Freedom Food welfare standards within the next two years."

However, if you could provide accurate figures including the names of the companies and farms killing seals under the Freedom Food scheme it would be much appreciated.

Please note that RSPCA-certified companies including [Loch Duart](#), [Scottish Salmon Company](#), [Hjaltland Seafarms](#), [Marine Harvest](#), [Meridian](#) and [Scottish Seafarms](#) were named recently by Marine Scotland as serial seal killers. According to information supplied via [Freedom of Information](#), the mass murderers of over 200 Scottish seals during 2011 were as follows:

Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd – 50 seals killed

The Scottish Salmon Co Ltd – 45 seals killed

Scottish Seafarms Ltd – 37 seals killed

Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd – 34 seals killed

Northern Isles Salmon Ltd (Meridian group) – 22 seals killed

Lakeland Marine Farm Ltd – 17 seals killed

West Minch Salmon Ltd – 9 seals killed

Dawnfresh Farming Ltd – 6 seals killed

Loch Duart Ltd – 5 seals killed

Bound Skerries Seafoods Ltd – 4 seals killed

In 2012 (up to April), another 81 seals were killed by the following Scottish salmon farming companies (all but one if not every company is certified by the RSPCA):

The Scottish Salmon Company – 21 seals killed

Scottish Sea Farms Ltd – 17 seals killed

Hjaltland Seafarms Ltd – 15 seals killed

Meridian Salmon Group – 13 seals killed

Marine Harvest (Scotland) Ltd – 9 seals killed

Loch Duart Ltd – 5 seals killed

Dawnfresh Farming Ltd – 1 seals killed

Read the correspondence with the Scottish Government in full [online here](#)

The RSPCA's support for seal killing is nothing short of shameful. How can the RSPCA certify salmon farms as welfare-friendly under the Freedom Food scheme when seals are being shot as a first not last resort?

The '[RSPCA Welfare Standards for Farmed Salmon](#)' (2010) states that repeated shooting of seals will result in the site being suspended:

**HP 6.14 \*** The producer must be able to demonstrate to the Freedom Food Assessor or the RSPCA Farm Livestock Officer that all of the procedures leading up to the point of last resort have been mobilised.

-  The repeated shooting of seals without having deployed all of the measures leading to a last resort scenario, will result in the site being suspended from the scheme pending further investigation.

However, a Government survey found that only 20% of Scottish salmon farms even have predator nets. “A government survey showed that 80 per cent of salmon farms in Scotland do not have anti predator nets,” reported the [Shetland News](#) in March 2011.

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