

**THE SCOTTISH Sun ON SUNDAY SAYS 18|02|18**

**ONCE upon a time, a position as a hospital consultant was the kind of job talented doctors and surgeons would fight over.**

Not any more. Now one consultant post in every 13 is vacant and hundreds have gone unfilled for over six months.

Health boards simply can't fill the posts and they are forced to shell out almost £40,000 a day to hire temporary replacements.



Overtime... consultants

**Get a grip on docs shortage**

It's an expensive and inefficient way of papering over the cracks and, for many NHS staff, it means a treadmill of endless duties as they work their own shifts and then come back to the same ward on double time the next day.

There's no business on earth that could operate like that and the only way the NHS can manage it is

because it has access to a taxpayer-funded money pit.

Audit Scotland has already reported that ministers failed to do the necessary forward planning on staff, leaving the country short of the doctors and nurses we need.

Health service managers are doing their best but international recruitment campaigns have failed to attract the permanent staff required.

And the multi-million pound bill for part-time replacements is a drain on scarce NHS resources.

**It's just another indication of the strain our vital services are facing and another sign of the far-reaching reform that is going to be required if the NHS is going to go on keeping us safe for another generation.**

**Give him some credit**

**SOMETIMES you can't do right for doing wrong — as MP Ian Blackford has found out.**

The Nats' Westminster leader intervened after RBS announced branches were to shut. And he celebrated after securing the futures of two of them.

Now it's emerged some staff are unhappy — as they were looking forward to their generous redundancy packages.

**We hope they won't hold it against Mr Blackford — he was trying to do his best for their communities.**

**She'd be Bite special**

**MICHELLE Obama could be the next big name to grace the Social Bite cafe — if bosses get their way.**

They hope the former US First Lady will follow in the footsteps of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle who popped in to the Edinburgh diner last week.

It's previously been visited by George Clooney and Leonardo DiCaprio.

**It would be a major coup to tempt Michelle — Barack coming too would be the icing on the cake.**

**the SUNDAY ISSUE | FEARS SALMON FARMING IS BAD FOR ENVIRONMENT**

THE salmon fishing industry is under the microscope after a Holyrood committee launched an inquiry examining its impact on the environment.

Fish farm opponents claim many consumers are unaware the salmon they are buying comes from cages in the sea as brand names like M&S's 'Lochmuir' give the impression they are freshly caught.

Critics also say the mass production technique causes sea lice, marine pollution and puts the genetics of wild fish at risk when farmed salmon escape nets

and go on to breed with them. But industry chiefs insist salmon farming is vital to the economy as it supports thousands of jobs in rural areas and is Scotland's largest food export, worth £600million.

A cross-party group of MSPs will now look at the state of the industry as a whole and whether it should be subject to tighter regulations.

It comes after experts this month warned that sewage from our 250 farms could equal half of all the country's human waste by 2020 if the production target of

200,000 tonnes of fish is met. And we told how 50,000 of the species are feared to have made a break for freedom through a hole in an underwater cage at Grieg Seafood in Loch Snizort, Skye.

Wild salmon get their pink flesh from a diet of crustaceans like shrimp or krill. However farmed salmon are fed a diet of pellets containing dyes to create the appealing 'salmon' colour.

With 99.9 per cent of fresh and smoked salmon for sale in supermarkets thought to come from farms, we ask: Are they doing more harm than good?

**250 (approximately) salmon farms in Scotland**

**163,000 tonnes of salmon produced in 2016 worth £765m**

**200,000 tonnes of salmon to be produced by 2020**



**What's the catch?**

**IT HELPS**  
**SCOTT LANDSBURGH** Chief executive of Scottish Salmon Producers Organisation

**SALMON farming may be only 40 years old but it has transformed the food sector and the rural west Highlands and Islands with jobs, investment and business opportunities.**

Schools are open, houses built, and local shops are busy as families can now stay and work in the communities they grew up in.

In salmon farming areas you hear people say again and again that without salmon farms they wouldn't have the new playground or the swimming club or mountain rescue volunteers or the community council.

Last year, salmon farming donated £735,000 to local sports and community groups. It is more than just a business — it's a social and economic lifeline.

Last week, figures showed that salmon remains Scotland's and the UK's biggest food export worth £600million. A record result.

Overseas, people love Scottish salmon for its taste and quality. In the UK, salmon is the most popular fish in the supermarket trolley. Fresh, tasty, easy to cook and healthy, too. No wonder our workers are proud to farm Scottish salmon. More than

**'Remote farms an economic lifeline'**

10,000 people work in salmon farming and related transport and processing jobs.

With apprenticeships, training and career opportunities, second generations are joining the sector. From engineers to fish health managers the range of jobs available is impressive.

Personal checks of the fish still happen day in, day out. The fish need to be looked after, like any farm animals, with jags and treatments to keep them clear of sea lice. It's all done under the vet's supervision and plenty of regulation from Sepa and the Government.

Salmon need high quality water to thrive — so it's in farmers' interests to protect the environment.

Salmon farming is here to stay, investing to ensure it keeps doing well for its fish, the environment, its workers and their communities.

**146,000 salmon have entered the sea from Scottish farms**

**IT HARMS**  
**DON STANIFORD** Director of the Global Alliance Against Industrial Aquaculture

**FARMED salmon is the most contaminated food in the supermarket — laden with cancer-causing chemicals like DDT, dioxins and PCBs.**

Then there's the artificial colouring which farmers add to the feed to dye the flesh of salmon an appetising red colour.

Forget the romantic image of Atlantic salmon rising majestically to catch a fly. In fact, over 12million salmon die each year on Scots farms — a jaw-dropping mortality rate of 26.7 per cent.

If a quarter of our cows, pigs, sheep or chickens were dying each year there would be a public outcry.

Compassion in World Farming view salmon farming as a welfare nightmare. Last year, 135,000 farmed salmon died after being Thermoliced or Hydroliced via huge washing machines heating the fish up to 34 degrees.

The Scottish salmon you see in supermarkets — even packets stamped by the RSPCA and 'organic' salmon certified by the Soil Association — is factory farmed in cages. Crammed in like battery chickens, farmed salmon are couch potatoes.

**'Poison poo is polluting waters'**

No wonder the fatty product you see glistening with white lines on the fishmonger's slab is 15 per cent fat — even fatter than pizza. Farmed salmon is a far cry from athletic wild salmon leaping up waterfalls.

Then there is the poisonous poo discharged by salmon farms — which use lochs as toxic toilets. Peek beneath a salmon farm and you'll see a marine desert devoid of life as sewage effluent smothers the seabed.

Research shows chemicals used on salmon farms kill lobsters and other shellfish.

Think you're saving wild fish by eating farmed? Think again. Salmon farms are draining our oceans of wild fish — including Antarctic krill — for use in feed.

Scottish salmon should carry a health warning like cigarettes rather than being marketed as a healthy food. Cheap and nasty Scottish salmon leaves a bad taste in the mouth.