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Block Corporate Salmon press conference at Farm Aid:

**Date:** Thursday, September 21, 2023

**Time:** 11:30 am

**Location:** Albany, IN. Contact Feini Yin for exact location ([feini@namanet.org](mailto:feini@namanet.org), 908-745-9768). Allow for approximately 1 hour travel time from Farm Aid.

- [See here](#) for speaker bios.
- For day-of updates and livestreams, visit [@BlockCorporateSalmon](#) on Instagram.
- We will update [this Google Folder](#) with photos.

## Fishers and farmers jointly call for global boycott of genetically engineered salmon at 2023 Farm Aid

*The annual celebration of family farmers will be held in Indiana, near the world's principal facility growing genetically engineered salmon, run by biotech company AquaBounty.*

**INDIANAPOLIS, In.** — Food from land and water will converge at [Farm Aid 2023](#), a celebration of family farmers taking place September 23 in Noblesville, IN.

The annual music and food festival is collaborating with the [North American Marine Alliance](#) and the [Block Corporate Salmon](#) campaign to call for a global boycott of genetically engineered salmon, which in 2015 [became](#) the first and only genetically modified animal product approved for sale in the US. Leading up to the festival, on September 21, Block Corporate Salmon will hold a press conference featuring fishing, farming, and food experts to raise awareness about the risks and harms of GE salmon.

“Our food systems don’t stop at the water’s edge, especially when billions of people around the world rely on aquatic foods as a major source of protein,” said Jim Goodman, president of the [National Family Farm Coalition](#). “GE salmon should concern us all, as it further entrenches the commodification and proprietary patenting of our food. Food is a basic human right — not a tool for building Big Ag empires.”

Noblesville is a short drive from the world’s principal facility growing so-called AquaAdvantage salmon, which is genetically modified to grow to market size faster than non-engineered

Salmon. The land-based facility in Albany, IN is owned and operated by AquaBounty, the Massachusetts-based biotech company that produced and trademarked AquaAdvantage.

In 2022, Block Corporate Salmon released “[AquaBounty Exposed](#),” a report that outlined [alarming conditions](#) at AquaBounty’s Albany facility. Former employee, Braydon Humphrey, shared more than 60 pages of [photo and video evidence](#) detailing how AquaBounty regularly violated food and worker safety standards, ignored animal welfare concerns, and caused environmental damage unbeknownst to the public and its investors.

“I was deeply disturbed by what I witnessed during my time at AquaBounty,” said Humphrey, who worked as a tech at the Indiana facility from December 2018 to January 2020. “Among other atrocities, we saw high mortalities in densely packed fish tanks — including common instances of AquaAdvantage salmon dying from ruptured stomachs, caused by their artificially fast growth rate.”

Before joining Farm Aid activities, organizers from the [Block Corporate Salmon](#) campaign will hold an offsite press conference on Thursday, September 21 to draw attention to the company’s dysfunction, sound the alarm on a [new GE salmon farm](#) AquaBounty is trying to build in Ohio, and amplify Native-led solutions to the Salmon crisis, such as dam removal and Salmon habitat restoration.

“For Indigenous [Salmon peoples](#), wild Salmon are our sacred relatives,” said Carl Wassilie, a Yup’ik biologist and organizer with the Block Corporate Salmon campaign, who is rooted deeply in Salmon culture and ecosystems. “The development and commercialization of GE salmon threatens entire ecosystems that depend on wild Salmon. It is also a flagrant affront to our way of life and wellbeing. Yet AquaBounty and the FDA have repeatedly failed to consult Tribes in their process.”

Following the press conference, on the evening of September 21, Farm Aid will hold a Salmon bake and BBQ featuring fish harvested by [Randy Settler](#), a [Yakama Tribal fisherman](#), from the [Columbia River](#), which flows from British Columbia through Washington and Oregon.

“Our intention behind serving wild, Tribal-caught Salmon from the Columbia River is to share a deeper appreciation of where our food comes from in a cultural and spiritual context,” Wassilie said. “This is in stark contrast to AquaBounty’s frankenfish, questionably labeled as salmon.”

On Saturday, September 23, Block Corporate Salmon will also host an interactive exhibit at the festival’s [HOMEGROWN Village](#), held before that evening’s concert. The exhibit invites festival goers to collaboratively envision a future food system that prioritizes the wellbeing of communities and ecosystems.

Such a food system might be built on values like those shared in a recently-published [Aquaculture Values Report](#), collectively created by fishing community members, said Jon Russell, a food justice organizer for both the North American Marine Alliance and Block Corporate Salmon.

“Our exhibit speaks to the amazing work that Tribal fishers and other community-based fishers are doing across the country to sustain healthy ecosystems — which also happens to be our argument for why ‘food systems developments’ like GE salmon and industrial aquaculture systems are nothing more than false solution cash grabs disguised as ‘green innovation,’” Russell said.

#### Additional info:

For additional background about the North American Marine Alliance, Block Corporate Salmon, AquaBounty, and Farm Aid, [click here](#).

For additional quotes, [click here](#).