

## PET LISTENING – FISH FARMS

Instructions – Listen to the radio program about fish Farms and choose the correct answer for each question A-C

### QUESTION

- 1) Several fishermen in Maine recently completed a study program at the country's first ever "Cod Academy."
  - a) Maryland
  - b) Maine
  - c) Massachusetts
- 2) The program is aimed at helping who?
  - a) New fishermen
  - b) New Farmers
  - c) Commercial Fishermen
- 3) Who is Sebastian Belle
  - a. The head of the Maine Fisherman's Association
  - b. Thea head of the Maine Marine Culture Association
  - c. The head of the Maine Aquaculture Association
- 4) Why are the circular fish pens covered?
  - a. To keep the seabirds out
  - b. To keep the fish in
  - c. To keep out the fish
- 5) How many commercial cod farms are there in Maine?
  - a. One
  - b. Two
  - c. Many
- 6) Students are taught how to
  - a. Harvest the fish without waste
  - b. Feed the fish correctly
  - c. Make fish farming efficient
- 7) Bill Thompson earns money
  - a. Fishing Cod on a boat
  - b. Fish farming
  - c. Fishing under water for lobster
- 8) Why is Mr. Thompson interested in fish farming
  - a. For his future
  - b. For the future of the business
  - c. For his children's future
- 9) What does Mr. Belle hope?
  - a. That fish farming will become a good business
  - b. That people will realize that is it a good business
  - c. That more farms start to feed the hungry

## ANSWERS

### Fish Farming

- 10) Several fishermen in Maine recently completed a study program at the country's first ever "Cod Academy."
- d) Maryland
  - e) Maine**
  - f) Massachusetts
- 11) The program is aimed at helping who?
- d) New fishermen
  - e) New Farmers
  - f) Commercial Fishermen**
- 12) Who is Sabastian Belle
- a. The head of the Maine Fisherman's Association
  - b. Thea head of the Maine Marine Culture Association
  - c. The head of the Maine Aquaculture Association**
- 13) Why are the circular fish pens covered?
- a. To keep the seabirds out**
  - b. To keep the fish in
  - c. To keep out the fish
- 14) How many commercial cod farms are there in Maine?
- a. One**
  - b. Two
  - c. Many
- 15) Students are taught how to
- a. Harvest the fish without waste
  - b. Feed the fish correctly**
  - c. Make fish farming efficient
- 16) Bill Thompson earns money
- a. Fishing Cod on a boat
  - b. Fish farming
  - c. Fishing under water for lobster**
- 17) Why is Mr. Thompson interested in fish farming
- a. For his future
  - b. For the future of the business
  - c. For his children's future**

18) What does Mr. Belle hope?

- a. That fish farming will become a good business
- b. That people will realize that is it a good business
- c. That more farms start to feed the hungry

## TRANSCRIPT

### Fish Farming

Several fishermen in Maine recently completed a study program at the country's first ever "Cod Academy." The Maine Aquaculture Association directs the program. It trains fishermen who usually earn a living fishing in the ocean to be fish farmers. The program is aimed at helping commercial fishers to find a new way to carry out their trade.

On a recent morning, a fishing boat left the public dock in the seaside community of Sorrento, Maine. But the men on the boat were not going fishing ... they were going farming.

SEBASTIAN BELLE: "Today we're probably going to be moving cages and sorting codfish so the students will get experience doing that".

That was Sebastian Belle. He is head of the Maine Aquaculture Association. It operates the new "Cod Academy" in partnership with the University of Maine and other organizations.

About one and a half kilometers out to sea, the boat finds eight circular pens. A rubber tube encloses each one. The pens are covered with netting material to keep out seabirds. Inside each of the fifty-meter wide areas are up to fifty thousand cod. Most of these fish will be served on dinner tables around the world.

This is the only commercial cod farm in Maine. The operator is Great Bay Aquaculture, a fish-farming company. It is one of the partners in the Cod Academy.

Mr. Belle says that during a year, students are taught everything they need to know about operating a floating farm.

SEBASTIAN BELLE: "One of the things we've been teaching the students is how to feed the fish and not overfeed the fish. So you want to give them enough feed, and not waste any feed and make it as efficient as possible."

The fish-farmers in training take turns throwing special fish food into the pen.

Air bubbles appear as thousands of cod come up to feed. They can be seen from the boat with an underwater camera.

Bill Thompson is one of the Cod Academy's four students. He says the program has showed him that aquaculture, or fish-farming, is a wise choice.

BILL THOMPSON SR: “Even if the wild stocks came back to their fullest capacity they still wouldn’t feed the world. So this is the way of the future. And it’s feasible for a family to run a business also.”

That is why Mr. Thompson’s son is also a student at the academy. Thirty-nine year old Bill Thompson Junior has been a working fisherman for much of his life. He earns a living diving for urchins and fishing for lobster. But he notes that he has a wife and four children to support, so it was time for a change.

BILL THOMPSON JR: “Well I’ve seen a depletion of the source of everything I have been harvesting over the years. I look into the future; I can’t see my kids set up in what I’m doing right now as far as, you know, lobstering, urchining. I don’t want to see them get a source that’s depleting every year.”

Becoming a fish-farmer has its own financial risks. Sebastian Belle says students need to develop a business plan before they can graduate. They will be expected to raise about half of the money they would need for any farm they want to create. Mr. Belle says the “Cod Academy” is based on successful programs started in Japan and Norway more than thirty years ago. Those programs were created to retrain fishers who once caught tuna and herring.

SEBASTIAN BELLE: “It’s never been done before in America and we’re trying to see if it’s a model that has some potential.

Mr. Belle says he hopes the program will help people in Maine realize the huge promise that cod farming holds. He admits aquaculture has its critics. Critics say that crowding fish together in a farm can spread disease and produce unhealthy fish.

But Mr. Belle says Maine’s fish farmers have learned from those mistakes. And he says state inspectors make sure that fish farms obey environmental rules.

The first students of the “Cod Academy” graduated this month. They are now permitted to seek financial aid from the Maine Aquaculture Association to start their own cod-farms.

This program was written and produced by Dana Demange, with reporting by Tom Porter and Jeff Swicord. I’m Barbara Klein.

And I’m Mario Ritter. You can find our programs online with transcripts, MP3s, podcasts and pictures at [voaspecialenglish.com](http://voaspecialenglish.com) Join us again next week for EXPLORATIONS in VOA Special English.