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Advances in nutritional biotechnology in aquaculture

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The importance of aquaculture continues to expand especially for freshwater species and almost one third of fish used for human consumption are now produced in aquaculture. Also, consumption of fishes for food is projected to reach 165 million tons by 2030. As wild catch fisheries are now approaching full exploitation worldwide, a large part of this increase will have to come from aquaculture. The identification of alternative fish species and suitable feed ingredients for their diet formulations has therefore become very important. The main goal of fish nutrition as a scientific discipline is to produce feeds that support good growth rates while maintaining fish health and quality, resulting in a safe and healthy product for the consumer at low cost. Besides feed development, feed management and feed quality are critical factors for profitability of fish farming, especially in intensive aquaculture. A balanced knowledge on fish nutrition and feed management is of paramount importance for sustainable fish production. Use of nutritionally balanced and complete formulated feed will continue to play a dominant role in finfish production. The potential of biotechnology in aquaculture nutrition and health management is to contribute to increasing agricultural food and feed production, improving human and animal health, decreasing pollution and protecting the environment. Biotechnology makes it possible to achieve increased growth rate in farmed species, boost the nutritional value of feed, improve fish health, extend the range of aquatic species and improve the management and conservation of wild stocks. Biotechnology is also helping to answer some of the technical and environmental concerns of fish farming. Alternative and biotechnologically improved feed ingredients should be sought along with improvements in pond management and manipulation of pond productivity. This paper briefly reports the current progress in the use of biotechnology in aquaculture nutrition and health management.

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