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Intelligence

Australia's Deakin University announces plans for new aquaculture research center

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By Responsible Seafood Advocate

The AquaFI Hub is a \$9.8 million investment for farming, feed and technology development

Deakin University in Victoria, Australia, announced plans to construct a \$9.8 million state-of-the-art aquaculture research center for sustainable fish production, novel feed and aquaculture technology development and industry training.

Associate Professor David Francis from Deakin's School of Life and Environmental Sciences will lead research on improving the sustainability of the aquaculture industry with a strong focus on aquafeeds and finding novel ingredients to replace traditional marine ingredients like fishmeal and fish oil.

"Our key focus is to improve the way we feed our farmed fish, and to make it more nutritious and sustainable," Francis said in a news release. "Aquaculture covers a range of disciplines, like biology, chemistry, engineering and economics. We want to bring in the entire aquaculture industry and solve these problems together."

The AquaFI Hub on the Waurin Ponds campus will receive funding from the Victorian Government



Associate Professor David Francis from Deakin's School of Life and Environmental Sciences. Deakin's new aquaculture research center will focus on sustainable fish production and novel feed and aquaculture technology development.

through its Higher Education State Investment Fund. According to Francis, a circular "bioeconomy" is the future of the aquaculture feed industry. The facility will work directly with industry to explore the use of sustainable ingredients in creating fish food, including the use of underutilized byproducts from other industries.

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Francis and his team will collaborate with Deakin's School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences to ensure any new feed products don't negatively impact fish texture or flavor.

"We're looking to make some major strides towards the on-farm management of fish through our novel dietary interventions," he said.

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