



## ASFB Briefing – 9 August 2007

**\*Important\***

### **Incidence of bleeding vents in salmon**

A widely noted feature of this years run of grilse are reports of fish with distended and bleeding vents. This has occurred in fish previously, although there is certainly a much greater number of affected fish over a wider geographical spread than more isolated incidents in previous years. There has been speculation as to what might be causing this, the most prevalent being that it could be due to the infestation of a small round worm which is quite common in wild fish. *Anisakis simplex* is such a worm which is often found in wild fish and can cause problems in humans if the fish is eaten raw.

I would emphasise, however, that no formal identification of the problem has yet been made. Fisheries Research Services are actively investigating this and they have noted the following:

- Initial observations of wild salmon exhibiting haemorrhaged and/or swollen vents were made in a population of fish collected for sampling for other purposes.
- Returning fish with similar symptoms have been reported as having been observed in 23 rivers
- The condition is geographically widespread, with rivers on both the east and west coast reporting apparently similarly affected fish.
- The vast majority of affected fish appear to be grilse, but it has been reported in a few multi-sea winter fish.
- Both hen and cock fish are affected.
- With the exception of the damage to the vent, the fish appear to be in good condition.

#### **What has been done by FRS**

1. A wide spectrum of diagnostic samples have been taken from a number of fish in different catchments exhibiting signs of haemorrhaged or swollen vents.
2. Further sites where significant numbers of affected fish have been identified have been targeted for further sampling
3. A more focused sampling plan will be activated once initial results are available.

## What further information do FRS require

1. Any person catching fish exhibiting signs of haemorrhaged vents should report it, either to the local salmon fishery board / fishery trust for onward reporting to FRS or report it directly to FRS. The more detail that can be provided will allow us to gain a better understanding of the situation in Scotland, but the following information would be useful:

- *The river or catchment where the fish was caught*
- *A grid reference if possible, or a geographical reference, especially in the larger catchments of where the fish was caught*
- *A description of what you have seen*
- *An indication of the number of fish that you have seen with haemorrhaged vents, with reference to the total number of fish that have been examined (the prevalence)*
- *An estimate of the fishes age - is it a grilse or a msw fish*

You can contact the fish health inspectorate by e-mail at: [fishhealth@marlab.ac.uk](mailto:fishhealth@marlab.ac.uk), or call 01224 876544 and ask to be put through to the Duty Inspector.

The co-operation of all Boards and Trusts in disseminating this information to individual fisheries and anglers and helping to co-ordinate reports to FRS would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any queries, please let us know.

Brian Davidson  
ASFB  
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