

# Indiana Fish Farm Expansion Faces Opposition

ALBANY, Ind. (AP) — An eastern Indiana fish farm that produces nearly 3 million pounds of fish a year is facing opposition to its proposed \$30 million expansion that would include adding a feed mill.

Bell Aquaculture, which touts itself as the nation's largest yellow perch farm, says the expansion would create 75 jobs to add to its current workforce of about 50 people at the company's farm near the Delaware County town of Albany.

The company expects to produce about 2.8 million pounds of yellow perch, salmon, rainbow trout and steelhead trout this year, but wants to boost its annual production to 7.5 million pounds. Bell Aquaculture president Norm McCowan called the proposed feed mill "the first step" in launching Bell's \$30 million expansion.

But neighbors Tony and Amy Evans are opposing Bell's request for county permission to build the feed mill. The couple says strong odors from the farm's manure lagoon make it impossible for them to enjoy their home's patio, garden and the outdoors.

Tony Evans said the odor began last year after Bell Aquaculture added a \$1 million-plus wastewater treatment plant and installed a quarter-acre manure lagoon.

"We did not used to have this problem," Evans told [The Star Press](#). [1]

The couple hosted a meeting Monday to organize opposition to Bell's application for a zoning variance.

Farm officials say they're working to fix the odor troubles by upgrading with "de-watering" technology to reduce the smells.

Bell recently acquired Grand Junction, Colo.-based Integral Fish Foods and plans to relocate that company's Colorado operations its Albany farm.

The mill's production capacity would be 2.2 million pounds of feed per month, with more than half of the feed ingredients coming from locally produced soybeans and grains. And the proposed mill would be temporary.

Bell is working to open a proposed 60-acre "aquapark" in a partnership with the county's government, where the company plans to build a permanent fish feed mill that it hopes can attract other aquaculture businesses.

Dave Lowe, president of the Indiana Soybean Alliance's board of directors, said the mill would help unlock the state's "immense" opportunity for aquaculture and bring in new tax revenue.

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"We have needed this mill in Indiana to have the ability to source feed locally for quite some time," Lowe said.

Information from: The Star Press, <http://www.thestarpress.com> [2]

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