

## SAIA - QUARANTINE PROCEDURES

Note: This document outlines quarantine procedures SAIA recognizes and recommends as best practices in line with the Code of Best Practices.

### **Purpose of Quarantine:**

The principal reason for quarantine is the isolation of new arriving livestock from stock in your holding systems. Quarantine can be seen as a kind of insurance, preventing disease breakouts and parasite infestation among previously held stock and in your main systems.

During this resting period the organisms can acclimate and recover from the stressful transport.

Stress can be defined as a state of reduced fitness. Stress producing factors and also the resulting stress responses can sum up and then overexert the strength of the fish, although the single influences were only minor. Thus the risk lies not only in stressed, new arriving organisms carry disease but also weakened new arriving organisms being especially susceptible to existing pathogens in the main system.

The new arrivals shall be closely monitored during quarantine and treated when necessary.

Organisms in quarantine shall not be offered for sale.

A proper quarantine will save you and your customers money and help avoiding disappointment.

### **Quarantine Procedures**

#### **What it needs**

Quarantine tanks shall be separated from water circulation of all other systems in your facility and placed away from the public eye wherever possible (as display and shopping customers can be additional stress to your tank mates).

Thus a proper quarantine requires in most cases the set up of an additional system. Depending on turnover and/or size of your facility the acclimation tanks can also be used as quarantine system as well as empty parts of your holding system that can be cut off from the water circulation of other holding tanks with previously held stock.

In any case the set up of a quarantine tanks is similar to a 'normal' tank, besides only simple equipment is necessary. It needs a

- filtration system,
- pumps to ensure water flow,
- UV or Ozone sterilisation
- temperature regulation,
- lighting – may need slightly lower light levels than regular tank,
- skimmer and
- maybe air stones.

Hiding grounds shall be provided when necessary, but should be simple to not interfere with daily observation and sanitation.

Water parameters shall be kept similar to the water quality in the general holding system. Water quality shall be regularly monitored and corrective action taken when parameters are found out of tolerance.

Supplies (e.g. nets) to handle the organisms in the quarantine period shall be dedicated to those tanks only and regularly disinfected after use – remember to disinfect handle as well as head of nets.

In general the system shall be easy to clean after the quarantine cycle of one shipment.

### **Quarantine Process**

- 1) Depending on if you use the acclimation tanks for quarantine, all organisms shall be transferred after acclimation to quarantine tanks.
- 2) New arrivals from different suppliers shall be separated into different quarantine systems.
- 3) Incompatible organisms shall be separated to prevent fighting and stress.
- 4) During quarantine the condition and behaviour of the organisms shall be closely monitored. When organisms show signs of disease and/or distress they shall be isolated for treatment in hospitalization tanks. A thorough diagnosis will help to determine the most effective treatment\*.
- 5) All organisms shall be fed at least daily, depending on their dietary needs.
- 6) The system and tanks shall be maintained hygienically and clean with appropriate water quality.

### **Duration of Quarantine**

New arrivals shall be rested for a minimum of 48 hours or until normal behaviour and feeding patterns resume. Only organisms free from signs of disease and distress shall be transferred to the holding/display tanks and offered for sale.

As many disease-causing parasites need several weeks to complete their life cycle, signs of disease might not be visible for several days. Therefore an extended quarantine period allowing the monitoring the condition and behaviour of the organisms is recommendable, but will depend on the turnover rate and economical viability.

SAIA members shall give instructions to their customers on quarantine procedures and their benefits.

Public Aquariums shall quarantine new arrivals at the minimum for 30 days. The quarantine period extends if organisms show signs of disease and distress until normal behaviour and feeding patterns resume.

After one quarantine cycle and between uses the tanks shall be drained off, carefully cleaned and disinfected. A mild chlorine bleach solution can be used. All detergent and disinfectant residue need to be rinsed off thoroughly before re-use. If possible the tanks shall be dried.

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\* See SAIA Technical Document 4: Dealing with and Treating Disease