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Get fish fresh from the farm - via the Net

Barramundi Asia's farm stresses green practices

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The harvested barramundi are immediately kept in ice. They remain at sub-zero temperatures even while being filleted and packed before being sent to consumers. -- ST PHOTO: ONG WEE JIN

BY JACQUELINE WOO

HOME-GROWN fish farm Barramundi Asia launched an online platform yesterday so consumers can buy its products over the Internet.

The barramundi fish are harvested from the firm's 7.5ha ocean farm in Pulau Semakau, filleted and vacuum-packed before being delivered in insulated boxes filled with ice.

The fish are kept at sub-zero temperatures even during the filleting and packing processes.

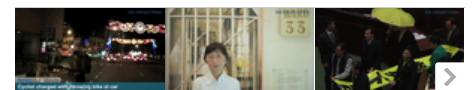
This is fresher and more hygienic than if consumers were to buy fresh fish and transport them home as the fish would likely thaw on the journey, noted Mr Andrew Kwan, group managing director of Commonwealth Capital, which co-owns the Barramundi Asia.

The fish are being sold under the new brand Kuhlbarra on the site www.kuhlbarra.com.

Barramundi Asia, which claims to be Singapore's largest fish farm, exports around 20 tonnes of fish a month to hotels and restaurants in Australia.

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It also supplies fish to local hotels and restaurants.

Mr Kwan said demand for the farm's barramundi has "gone up over the past few years", as people become more discerning about what they eat and more environmentally aware.

"There is a huge potential for the sale of sustainably farmed fish in Singapore, and we look forward to putting more locally grown fish on dining tables in Singapore," he added.

Barramundi Asia will set up a second farm site - of 12ha - within the next two years to cater to the demand.

The firm, established in 2008, stresses its environmentally conscious practices.

The fish are fed high-quality fishmeal from a sustainability-certified manufacturer, it said.

The ocean enclosures off Pulau Semakau are in areas with strong currents so no excess feed builds up while fish waste is dispersed to be naturally recycled in the ecosystem.

"We believe that the best way to grow healthy, good-tasting fish is to feed them with high-quality food and let them swim in clean ocean waters," said managing director Joep Staarman.

"The best evidence of our environmentally sensitive approach can be seen from our farm - a delicate coral reef thrives in the waters just 200m from the sea cages."

Barramundi Asia's fish are going at an introductory price of \$50 per kg online, which is inclusive of delivery.

Single portions are also available at \$10 for 200g fillets.

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BACKGROUND STORY

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There is a huge potential for the sale of sustainably farmed fish in Singapore, and we look forward to putting more locally grown fish on dining tables in Singapore.

- Mr Andrew Kwan, group managing director of Commonwealth Capital, which co-owns the farm

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