



**SANFORD LIMITED**  
**SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD**

5 December 2011

**IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – EMBARGOED UNTIL 1 PM, MONDAY 5 DECEMBER**

**Oyster virus spells the likely end of oyster processing operations at its Kaeo plant**

Sanford Managing Director Eric Barratt advised that “an announcement was made to Sanford Kaeo employees at 1 pm today of plans to close the Kaeo oyster processing factory.

Although the plant ceased processing for the season last month we are now consulting with Kaeo employees, as well as with Government agencies and Northland civic, community and business leaders, over alternative employment prospects for our employees.”

Ultimately the decision may result in the loss of 15 permanent positions and the loss of seasonal employment opportunities for a further 51 positions.

“We are already putting in place a job search programme, contacting major employers in the Northland area in case of any vacancies appropriate for any of our team. We are also asking all Sanford plants and fleet operations to identify any vacancies throughout the Group.” Mr Barratt said.

Sanford’s decision is simply a reflection of not having enough oysters to process as a result of mortalities from the OshV-1 virus which has decimated the young oysters that we were growing for harvest in the next two years.

Sanford is working on a number of initiatives on its own account, with industry and with research organisations to mitigate the impacts of the virus. However at this stage it is not anticipated that these initiatives will have a consequential impact on the stock available for processing in future years.

A senior executive with Sanford, Mr Tom Birdsall, will be located in Kaeo to manage the transitional issues.

The Kaeo site will continue to be used as the base for our marine farming operations in Northland while we attempt to identify ways of mitigating the effects of the virus and at this stage, because of the success of the programme, we plan to continue our support of Kiwi Can at the two schools in the area.

While this decision is sad for the Northland region we will do all we can to mitigate the effects.

Eric Barratt  
**MANAGING DIRECTOR**

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