



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

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**PRESS RELEASE**

**Sanford Announces Partnership to Boost Greenshell Mussel Exports**

Sanford Limited is the commercial partner behind a \$26 million, seven-year innovation contract announced in Nelson today that will see New Zealand's famous Greenshell mussels selectively bred for the first time.

The contract between the Ministry for Primary Industries and Shellfish Production and Technology NZ Limited (SPATnz), which includes commercial partner, Sanford and research partners, Cawthron Institute and Plant & Food Research will see \$13 million each of public and industry funding invested in the project in what is being described as the most significant research and development investment made in New Zealand's Greenshell mussel industry since the first marine farms were established in the 1970's.

Greenshell mussels are a significant export growth opportunity for Sanford, which already has both mussel farming and processing operations and exports around the world. Sanford is also part of a push to grow Greenshell mussel exports to China, which is now in its second year and seeing growth over 30%.

Sanford Managing Director, Eric Barratt says until now mussels have been grown from wild spat. He says the commercial implications for now commercialising the world-leading research techniques that allows spat to be selectively bred and grown for their taste and size profiles will be transformative for New Zealand's Greenshell mussel exports.

Mr Barratt was in China last week at the world's largest seafood expo promoting New Zealand's Greenshell mussels. "This is a highly regarded product from New Zealand. In being able to take control of the breeding process, we can create innovative products best suited to the needs and tastes of our international customers," he said.

"Smart, sustainable aquaculture will be critical to our export success into the future. For the first time mussel farming will be able to take advantage of selective breeding in the same way that our sheep, dairy and other primary exporters have done for decades to gain export premiums for their products."

"Sanford is very pleased to be at the leading edge of taking this research and making it into a commercial reality working with our SPATnz partners and the Government to boost this industry."

The project is being announced in Nelson today by the Prime Minister during a visit to the Cawthron Institute with local Nelson MP, Hon Dr Nick Smith and will help to underpin the goal of boosting New Zealand aquaculture to a billion dollar a year industry.

The joint project will involve the development of a shellfish hatchery. Construction will begin in early 2013, with a hatchery building, nursing building and three ponds of approximately 1500sq metres each being built onsite. The first significant quantities of commercially bred mussels are planned for 2015.

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