

Nova Austral takes on new US director of sales

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Chilean salmon farming company Nova Austral, which operates in the southernmost tip of the country, has taken on Alex Malaguti as its new director of sales for US business development, according to Malaguti's LinkedIn profile.

Undercurrent News was unable to reach Nova Austral or Malaguti by the time of publication for a comment on the hiring.

According to his LinkedIn, Malaguti will be based in Florida as he assumes his position at Nova Austral.

Prior to this, Malaguti worked at Newport International Seafood, first in 2004 through 2009 as of director of marketing, then in 2011 through 2015 vice president of marketing and finally as executive director of sales from July 2015 to May 2017.

"Everything was going well at the company I was working for, I was happy there. The reason I made the move was that I felt Nova Austral had a very interesting new project," he told *Undercurrent*.

Between 2009 and 2011, Malaguti worked as vice president of marketing at Neco Foods.

The company -- which was born out of the acquisition of Pescanova's Chilean salmon farming assets by Altor Fund III and Bain Capital -- operates in the Magallanes region, more than 1,000 miles south of Puerto Montt, the traditional center of Chile's salmon industry.

"That's pretty compelling for me. There's a growing need for salmon and seafood in general that is sustainable and good for you, and this company ticked all the boxes," Malaguti said.

The new hire comes not long after the company announced it would begin construction of a new hatchery. The first smolts are expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2019.

The company's [CEO Nico Nicolaides recently told *Undercurrent*](#) the hatchery's capacity is 12 million smolts at 120 grams each, although during the winter months that may lower to 10m at 150 grams each.

"With this, we will no longer have to transfer smolts from the north (Puerto Montt) which helps us to reduce the sanitary risk," Nicolaides said.

In 2015 *Undercurrent* reported the company had been pushing for antibiotic-free salmon -- meaning no sea lice treatments, no use of antifouling, very low mortality and low density in the cages -- with European sales being the key focus.

The company got its [first Aquaculture Stewardship Council certification](#) in February of 2016, and at the time was already in the assessment process for an additional site.

By April 2016, the company told *Undercurrent* it was ready to start harvesting antibiotic-free Chilean salmon.

Last month the company said it would attempt to [sell more salmon to the US market](#), gradually moving sales away from countries such as Russia, where it has been strong in the past, because the company is able to market salmon at a higher price in the US with the antibiotics-free label.

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