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Treating outbreaks

Many diseases can be minimized through use of vaccines and good husbandry. When a disease or infestation occurs, treatment may be administered to protect the health of farmed and wild animals.

The [Aquaculture Activities Regulations](#) require that farms use drugs only if they are [authorized for sale by Health Canada](#), prescribed by a licensed veterinarian, and administered under the supervision of a person who is authorized to practise veterinary medicine. Pest control products are strictly regulated and must be used in accordance with the label conditions. Health Canada has strict rules governing the use of treatment products on animals grown for food. Health Canada sets [maximum residue limits](#) in harvested fish, and there must be appropriate time after the treatment before the fish can be harvested. The [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#) monitors fish at federally registered processing plants and tests for the presence of therapeutants in fish to ensure they do not exceed the levels set by Health Canada.

If the therapeutants used cause or are suspected to have caused a morbidity or mortality event among wild fish populations in the 96 hours following a deposit of drugs or pest control products, licence-holders must notify DFO immediately. If designated officers find that deposits made by aquaculture may have caused the event, samples will be taken and analyzed. If the analyses show that the substance has been deposited in an illegal manner – either the substance itself is illegal or the substance is legally authorized but was not used as authorized – Fisheries and Oceans Canada will investigate further and take appropriate enforcement action.