

**MEDIA RELEASE**

21 November 2024

**Aquaculture Gladstone celebrates Sea Mullet results on World Fisheries Day**

In a significant milestone for Gladstone Area Water Board (GAWB), Aquaculture Gladstone has successfully released 68,000 Sea Mullet fingerlings into Lake Awoonga.

Gladstone Area Water Board CEO, Darren Barlow, said the release was significant for fisheries throughout Australia.

"This is a huge step forward not only for Aquaculture Gladstone but for the entire industry, - showing large scale production is possible in controlled environments – so it's only fitting we make this announcement on World Fisheries Day," Mr Barlow said.

"Sea Mullet are notoriously difficult to breed in captivity, with several challenges including their sensitivity to environmental conditions and extremely delicate nature through the rearing process.

"The successful release is a testament to the hard work and innovation of our team. They are setting a new benchmark for sustainable aquaculture practices," he said.

The fingerlings were 4cm in size when released and are expected to grow to at least 40cm in the coming years, contributing to the ecological balance of the lake.

"Sea Mullet, not only are prey for larger fish, such as Barramundi, but also play a vital role in maintaining water quality and supporting the long-term health of the Lake Awoonga ecosystem," Mr Barlow said.

Sea Mullet are one of three fish species bred at Aquaculture Gladstone, GAWB's fish hatchery located at Lake Awoonga, and another Sea Mullet spawn is scheduled for 2025.

Aquaculture Gladstone is a multi-species, native fish hatchery, which is part of Gladstone Area Water Board. Opened in November 2022, Aquaculture Gladstone has bred one million Barramundi fingerlings and released them into Lake Awoonga in the 2023 stocking period.

In addition to its successful fish breeding program, Aquaculture Gladstone opened the interpretive display at the hatchery in November 2023. The interpretive display creates an accessible experience for visitors to learn about the different fish species being bred at the hatchery, the aquaculture industry more broadly, biosecurity and biological pest species.

Gladstone Area Water Board, as a Queensland Government Bulk Water Supply Authority, delivers safe and reliable water services which promote economic development and enhances the lifestyle of regional Queensland. GAWB owns and operates Awoonga Dam, along with a network of delivery pipelines, water treatment plants and other bulk water distribution infrastructure.

**ENDS**

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