

Internship Placement:

Organization:
Reliance Aqua Farm

Address:
Mymensing, Bangladesh

Location:
120 km northwest of Dhaka



1. Project description:

The farm is in the same area, Mymensingh. The farm belongs to Mr Ritish Pandit, an Engineer. This farm established in 2004 is on a 25 acres land and has 35 fish ponds. There are 120 staff during high season and 80 staff during the low season. He began with only 10,000 Taka and took a loan of 700,000 Taka. Now he has a multimillion Taka investment. The farm is specialised in the production of monosex tilapia, and others species. The farm produces 50 million sex reversed fry per year. The owner borrowed the idea of producing sex reversed fingerlings from AIT in Bangladesh through his sister who was at AIT. The farm has 3 stand-by generators to take care of power supply in the event of power cuts. The hatchery is equipped with water heaters that are used where constant high temperatures are required. The farm also has a mixer where a MT hormone used in sex reversing the fish is mixed with the feed. The quality (percentage of males) of sex reversed fingerlings is at 98%. His Breeding hapas measures 75 sq m (smaller compared to those in AIT) and holds 150-200 brooders with a ratio of 3 females to 1 male. Brooders are stocked at 150 g and when they grow to 500 they are replaced. Feeding is 3 times a day on 3-5% BW and when fish are 150g are fed at 5% CP and when they grow to 400 feeding is reduced to 3% CP. Reliance manager explained that the number of brooders with eggs in their mouth is seasonal. At 28-32°C about 42 to 50% of females have eggs at any time. During the rainy season, 70% of the females are ready but at Summer time only 10% has eggs. He has three farms and sources brooders from Bangladesh Fisheries Research Centre. Thus works very closely with the government extensionists and research centres. Stocks 1.5kg per sq metre and does three cycles per year. Uses 1kg feed fine fishmeal from China with 60g MT. Currently production is 50 million fry and project to a target of 80-100 million in a year. He plans to grow tilapia for export and to start a processing factory. He would also diversify to ornamental fish species such as Koi carp and catfish as well.

2. Location:

It is located 120 km northwest of Dhaka in a rural setting. But the provincial headquarters, Mymensing and Bangladesh Agriculture University (BAU) are about 15 km away from the farm where ATM cash machines, Banks and other facilities are there. It is also connected by train and buses from Dhaka.

3. Project Description

It is very much suitable for hands-on work. This is a specialized company which produces high quality "Tilapia Fry". Tilapia is a cichlid fish. It grows fast and is easy to raise therefore, well suited for poor farmers to earn quick cash and supply family with protein. Therefore, it is now dubbed as "poor men's fish". Tilapia hatchery project is unique of its kind developed through research at AIT which comprises a unique method of fish breeding, egg incubation and larval rearing. This technology was transferred to the private sector and has become a major breakthrough for the expansion of tilapia farming in Bangladesh and beyond. The hatchery also produces occasionally other types of fish e.g. catfish. As an intern you can help our staff for day-to-day work, carry out research, produce more fish fry to supply to more farmers and promote the technology through publication and communication. The hatchery helps local communities by supplying fish fry, providing knowledge and technical assistance as well. Internship period will be from 1-6 months. Working hours are 8 am – 4:30 pm (Monday – Friday). You are free for travel on weekends and any public holidays.

4. Living conditions:

Be prepared to live in a rural setting. Very few people can speak English. It will be a life-time experience in living with a local family as its member and learning local culture, language and adapting a different way of life. There is electricity. Land line and cellophone services are there. Cell phone works in the area but you have to have a machine and SIM card purchased in the local town. Internet services and ATM/cash machines are also available in the village. There are plenty of local food vendors which serve delicious Bangladeshi food.

5. Climate

Climate is tropical, warm and humid. Temperature may go up to 30°C in summer, which is quite hot. It may rain heavily for a short time in summer. During winter, temperature may fall around 15°C.

6. Culture:

It is important to respect local culture and traditions. Cover-up dresses are required. Shoes or sandals do not matter but most of the time you will need to walk; therefore, light sport shoes/trainers will be suitable. Dress conservatively; casual clothing is suitable while working at the fish farm - T-shirts, shorts and sandals are appropriate.

7. Host is happy to provide:

- Dormitory type accommodation nearby or you stay in BAU.
- Subsidized rate for food wherever possible
- Office space, computer and internet facilities
- Fish, labour and other materials for research, if needed

8. Your Costs:

- International airfare (please check with your University, may have this provision)
- Local transportation
- Fees for visa/passport
- Food and drinks (approx. about US\$1/meal)
- Any costs of trips, trainings, and others arranged personally
- Insurance and costs of damages due to personal negligence

9. Miscellaneous

Travel medical kit, light mosquito net, insect repellent, sleeping bag, flash light, umbrella or rain coat, few books, a towel and toiletries. But do not bother if you need to buy them, they are available locally at cheap prices.

Note: you will be paired with students of our local partner institution, as far as possible.