

Maiden harvest of cage farmed fish species soon



The orange spotted grouper and Indian pompanos grown after mass-scale production of seeds at CMFRI in Visakhapatnam.

ICAR-CMFRI Vizag unit has developed their seed production technology

The Visakhapatnam unit of ICAR-Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) will flag off the maiden harvest of cage farmed orange-spotted grouper and Indian pompano on August 16. The orange-spotted grouper (*Epinephelus coioides*) and Indian pompano (*Trachinotus mookalee*) are two candidate species having huge demand in finfish mariculture.

CMFRI Director Shubhadeep Ghosh told *The Hindu* that keeping this in view the Visakhapatnam Regional Centre of ICAR-CMFRI had developed seed production technology of the two species after extensive trials during past few years. The centre was credited with achieving a major breakthrough in the past in achieving mass scale production of orange-spotted grouper – known for rich content of Omega 3 and 6 fatty acids. It is low in the landing from the wild and fetches around ₹250 to ₹350 per kg in the domestic market.

Good prospects

The two species are highly amenable for cage farming with excellent growth rate and survival. “Hatchery-produced seeds of orange-spotted grouper and Indian pompano were stocked in marine cages off Visakhapatnam during 2017 and now, after one year of culture, time has come for harvest,” Dr. Ghosh said. The harvest forms the first reported grow-out and harvest of the two species from marine cages in India and will open new avenues for mariculture, significantly contributing to the blue revolution in the country.

The harvest will be flagged off by Dr. A. Gopalakrishnan, Director, ICAR-CMFRI. Commissioner of Fisheries Ramasankar Naik and Dr. G. Gopakumar, former principal scientist and head of Mariculture Division of ICAR-CMFRI will be the guests.