



FAST TILAPIA ARE SMALLER AND HEALTHIER

Tilapia that score high in a swimming test are more resistant to diseases. And that fitness is hereditary, write Wageningen researchers in *Scientific Reports*.

The researchers put the fish through a swimming test in which the tilapia had to swim against a current while the researchers gradually increased the strength of the current to measure the fish's fitness level. Researchers Samuel Mengistu found that the fish that swam faster grew more slowly. His co-supervisor, Arjen Palstra from Breeding and

The researchers advise tilapia farmers to use the swimming test in their breeding programmes

Genomics, thinks an old evolutionary principle is behind this: to escape its enemies, the fish either needs to grow faster or to swim faster.

Swimming test

The researchers have evidence that the faster fish are also more resistant to diseases. So they advise tilapia farmers to use the swimming test in their breeding programmes. Up to now, breeders tend to select primarily for fast growth.

Now that the water the fish live in is warming up and the pressure of disease is increasing, a healthy immune system is increasingly important. The Wageningen research team, led by personal professor Hans Komen, is going to do the fitness test with other fish too, such as trout and salmon. AS