

Salmon Farm Science

Examining the science behind salmon farming

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About this blog

We are unashamedly pro-aquaculture.



The population of this planet is going to hit seven billion people in our lifetime and farming fish is a brilliant technological innovation which will help feed them all.

Are there problems with farming fish? Yes. There are problems and concerns with everything human beings do.

But the biggest problem is how poorly and negatively aquaculture has been portrayed in the mass media, particularly salmon farming, which we will likely focus on the most in the topics and information we post here. We believe this negative portrayal is unfair and unwarranted.

We hope this little corner of the blogosphere will help change that, even a little bit, by bringing to light the vast amount of good science which supports aquaculture as a sustainable, good idea.

Our mission.

This site is dedicated to the science behind salmon farming. We believe the body of science shows that ocean salmon farms can provide a lot of food for people with a minimal environmental impact, while at the same time reducing fishing pressure on wild stocks which are on the brink of becoming overfished.

However, it has been our experience that the bulk of science which supports farmed salmon as a good idea and a healthy product is largely ignored, in favour of a small number of studies and research which casts salmon farming in a negative light.

We hope that by looking at all the science, it will help people put the issue in perspective.

We hope you find our posts interesting, entertaining, educational and informative.

We are constantly working to collect and post scientific papers and studies about salmon aquaculture. [Please visit our library.](#)

We are also open to discussion about science and our posts here. Please leave [general comments on the Discussion page](#). Please leave topic-specific comments on the relevant post. And please make sure you read the [comment moderation policy](#) before posting.

Comments in any other locations will be automatically deleted.

Thank you for visiting! Direct any questions, story ideas or submissions for our library to **salmonfarmscience {AT} gmail.com**

Also, please follow us on Twitter [@fishfarmscience](#)

Actions

-  [Edit](#)

62 responses

17 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (11:22:06) : [edit](#)

PLEASE NOTE: All comments on this page will be deleted by the end of today, Friday Feb. 17, 2012. Please use the Discussion page to leave off-topic comments, or leave on-topic comments on specific posts. Thank you!

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Mr.Enviro (15:07:14) : [edit](#)

I feel fish farming and the Aquaculture industry in Canada needs to be stopped immediately. All fish farms removed from the water and MORE research is needed ...on how to make this industry sustainable.! As it is very unsustainable at this time and it is polluting marine ecosystems around the world....Ireland,

Scotland, South America in Chile, Norway, and BC. We need to step back and see the damage done, already in these countries.

If we go about it in a non scientific manner like our Government is doing now, Without looking at all the situations and problems other countries have created, then we are foolish and stupid to fool around with our planet's natural systems and we are losing our wild salmon to this industry as we see now in BC. To say this blog is based on science i say this is a green wash attempt to find more support for an industry that is unsustainable around the world and in BC.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (15:20:33) : [edit](#)

Thanks for sharing your opinion, but have you actually bothered reading any of the science papers in our library?

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[Ivan Doumenc](#) (14:47:16) : [edit](#)

Dear "salmonfarmscience",

What clearly comes out of those exchanges (both from opponents and supporters of fish farms) is that the veil of anonymity behind which you choose to hide is not acceptable, and undermines your credibility.

Reveal yourself(ves)! or remain silent.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (14:51:35) : [edit](#)

Ivan, this is our blog and it is bullying and rude for you to demand we remain silent. If you don't like it, you are welcome to leave. We have clearly explained our reasons for remaining anonymous to you, any further posts from you on this subject will be marked as spam.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[Sabina Leclair](#) (16:17:34) : [edit](#)

After sitting in on the Cohen Commission all summer I realize that yes, the fish farms do believe in science, their own that is! And please don't go on about DFO and CFIA's science supporting yours because internal emails and inter company job hopping to positions of power, revealed a definite incestuous relationship between them and the farms. To the point of letting millions of eggs come into Canada without any disease protection other than a bit of iodine, which anyone's science shows does not kill virus's like ISA.

Also, DFO didn't submit an ISA science report into the Cohen Commission that showed 100% of the Cultus lake Sockeye were infected with ISA, the European strain no less, but instead of further testing, they just hid the "science" saying they were all "false positives"

And fish farmers claim that their science is sound when in fact it is backed up with their easy bake oven version of ISA testing apparatus that a student built, and has not ever been tested by anyone else to see if it even works. (apparently it doesn't because everyone else in the world can find ISA in BC fish, just not CFIA and fish farms)

When Dr. Nylund and Dr Kibenge, who are recognized world leading experts in ISA testing, asked in court about the testing equipment used by CFIA and the farms, they suggested the testing apparatus wasn't sensitive enough to pick up ISA, so it never will!

Dr Kristi Miller found ISA in one farms fish, but now all of a sudden she's not a good and credible scientist anymore, and is being dissed and threatened with cutbacks to her funding, although the farms did consider her good enough when they tried to hire her to test for ISA, but with the understanding they would keep the results and she wouldn't be allowed to reveal them to anyone else.

A few years ago when a science report (hites paper) suggested that farmed salmon is dangerously full of cancer causing pcbs and should not be eaten more than once every 4 months, and never for pregnant women is exactly when the farms hired the same advertising company big tobacco used and advertised to pregnant women as healthy and for young children as brain food. Criminal and shameful!

What I want to know, is that if your fish are so clean, why are you so very scared to hand them over for some "real" independent scientific testing? To date, no one has had access to your fish, other than Dr Kristi Miller and she found 3 serious diseases in just one little farm!

So far, I haven't been able to find anyone's science backing up fish farm science who wasn't paid by your industry or have some kind of financial ties to them, please let me know if I'm wrong on this, and supply me with that info!

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



salmonfarmscience (16:21:53) : [edit](#)

Hi there, we're not sure exactly what your point is. If you want to read some science, [take a look at our library](#). We include everything we can find in there.

We do take issue with your comment about the Hites paper though. If you visit our library and read the "Human Health" section you will see there are many studies showing that farmed salmon is at least as safe as wild salmon to eat regularly.

Thanks for visiting!

16 02 2012



Brian Daniel (13:55:50) : [edit](#)

Science

First Global Study Reveals Health Risks of Widely Eaten Farm Raised Salmon

Science Study Suggests Sharp Restrictions in Consumption

<http://www.albany.edu/ihe/salmonstudy/pressrelease.html>

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (14:09:47) : [edit](#)

That one is already in our library, thanks.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Brian Daniel (20:37:11) : [edit](#)

Nice you put it in your library but did you read it and how do you feel now about the fish in fish Farms. You ask other give me an answer

17 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (08:57:44) : [edit](#)

Yes we read it thank you. However, compared to the many peer-reviewed studies which have been done since, it is not convincing, especially since it relies on an outdated and unrealistic EPA guideline for PCB consumption. The gold standard is the FDA guideline, which is 2000 ppb per day. Under those guidelines it is safe to regularly eat farmed or wild salmon.

17 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (09:49:37) : [edit](#)

Because the body of science overwhelmingly shows that fish farms are a good idea, can be done sustainably and meet food demand while reducing the need to fish strained wild populations.

16 02 2012



Brian Daniel (13:51:25) : [edit](#)

Science.

Analysis of Fish Consumption Data Shows 800,000 U.S. Adults Eat Enough PCBs From Farmed Salmon to Exceed Allowable Lifetime Cancer Risk 100 Times Over

<http://www.ewg.org/release/first-ever-us-tests-farmed-salmon-show-high-levels-cancer-causing-pcbs>

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (13:54:55) : [edit](#)

Thanks Brian, we have added it to our library.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Brian Daniel (20:35:42) : [edit](#)

But no comment as to its effect on you support of Fish Farms

Why

16 02 2012



a person who reads (20:08:17) : [edit](#)

Also, eating butter milk and beef are FAR FAR worse than farmed salmon.

second PCB's have never caused cancer in humans. 3 cases went to court and were thrown out.

education is a good thing. try to find some.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (13:27:53) : [edit](#)

Hello new friends, given the flood of comments today (Feb. 16, 2012) we have posted our comment moderation policy at the top of this page. Please read it before posting and consider your comments accordingly. Thanks for visiting!

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Antartican (13:45:15) : [edit](#)

Yeah, sure. Another group promoting "real" science. And how is the weather next year?

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Erik Stockdale (13:15:03) : [edit](#)

I guess the question is whether you are here solely to discuss science, or also to resort to non-scientific ad hominem attacks in addition to science.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**Ed Henderson** (13:14:32) : [edit](#)

Please note that you ask for our names and don't give yours – first indication of a scam. Well, it's just too bad that your aquaculture happens to poison the natural environment – is that how you feel about nature? that it's OK to ruin the wild for your aquaculture? Wild fish don't need antibiotics, nor drugs, nor to be fed fish from the other side of the planet (fish that once was someone in else's food chain). If aquaculture was safe, did not bother any other ecosystems, did not harm other forms of life, was run by locals who cared about their neighbours it's very likely the industry would be welcomed. As is it now open net fish farming is just another land grab (sea grab) by another empire builder who cares nothing for anything but personal profit. This line that you are going to feed the world is simply corporate baffle gab garbage.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**salmonfarmscience** (13:18:09) : [edit](#)

Hi Ed, we don't ask for names. You are free to enter an alias and fake email in the fields if you want. As well, you make a lot of naked assertions with no proof to back it up. [Perhaps you should read through our science library.](#)

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**derek tait** (13:27:15) : [edit](#)

Dam... no like button.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**espen schive** (13:01:24) : [edit](#)

This smells corporate funding all the way to the bank.

Tell me why should I trust that this is not part of a campaign from the Industry. The world is not so much trustworthy any more...

<http://www.2oceansvibe.com/2012/02/16/heartland-institute-payded-scientists-to-discredit-climate-change-research/>

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**salmonfarmscience** (13:06:22) : [edit](#)

It's not important to us if you trust us or not, Espen. Read our blog or don't. Our mission here is to talk

about science, we encourage you to [read the library of science papers we have compiled for yourself](#). Hopefully you won't find it untrustworthy.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Erik Stockdale (11:10:32) : [edit](#)

The door swings both ways on this. Please refrain from posting cartoons, innuendo and character assassinations regarding people you don't agree with, especially if you don't reveal who you are. It is common courtesy. Thanks, Erik

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



salmonfarmscience (11:25:30) : [edit](#)

So Eric, why is it OK for people to post cartoons, innuendos and character assassinations of salmon farmers? We hope you are on all those blogs passing on your "white knight" messages there too.

We have been very careful not to assassinate anyone's character here. However, their ludicrous statements about salmon farming are fair game.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



andy miller (10:32:54) : [edit](#)

You certainly do NOT represent science. In fact it is plainly evident that you do not even understand the definition nor the practice of science. Please tell us who you are. I am Andy Miller, the Staff Scientist at the Wilderness Committee a group with 60,000 active people behind it.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



salmonfarmscience (10:52:53) : [edit](#)

We are here to talk about science, Andy, and we are quite confident we understand the definition and practice of science. IF you are confident we are wrong, please enlighten us with your particular definition.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Erik Stockdale (10:58:28) : [edit](#)

It is common practice in science to identify who you are. Professional scientists do not hide behind blogs. The scientific content of the blog is a separate issue. Please reveal yourself. Thank you.

16 02 2012

**salmonfarmscience** (11:03:43) : [edit](#)

Sorry Eric, that's not going to happen. As you can see, we are at high risk of nasty personal attacks from people visiting this site. We believe that maintaining our anonymity allows us to talk about science without people trying to twist our words and attack our credibility, or harass us outside of this blog.

People who don't like that decision are free to not read the blog, there are plenty of others out there.

16 02 2012

**derek tait** (13:17:07) : [edit](#)

I don't think she's a scientist, Andy. North Van Blogger maybe, not a scientist.

16 02 2012

**Ivan Doumenc** (10:00:57) : [edit](#)

People (or organizations) that do not reveal their identity always have something to hide.

If I had to take a guess, I would say that the "people" behind this blog work for the multi-billion fish farm industry, and the disclosure of their actual names would show just that

Dr. Alexandra Morton (who is the prime target of this blog) never hides behind anonymity. Many of the false statements made in this blog will find their science-based responses in Alexandra Morton's blog, which, very conveniently, is called:

<http://alexandramorton.typepad.com/>

Dear anonymous owners of this blogs, publish my comment if you dare.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012

**salmonfarmscience** (10:49:40) : [edit](#)

Thanks for your pontifications, Ivan, but you seem to have missed the point of this blog. Ms. Morton is not the prime target of this blog, we only bring her up when we talk about her forays into the world of scientific research. We are here to talk about science, as the majority of our posts and our science library show.

We have already stated here that some of us work in salmon farming, some don't. That's no big surprise.

Why are we anonymous? To avoid personal attacks from people like you and "Silversides Fishing" and your aggressive, sneering comments show us maintaining our anonymity was the right decision.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Ivan Doumenc (11:39:49) : [edit](#)

Dear “salmonfarmscience”,

Let’s pontify publicly! That’s all I’m asking.

It will also make things easier in the event that defamation lawsuits for presenting false allegations based on pseudo-science are warranted.

16 02 2012



a person who reads (20:10:39) : [edit](#)

Sorry i have to laugh when ever I see Dr. in front of Morton’s name.. given without ANY schooling to a person who loves sensationalism and junk science. Ms. Morton has been proved over and over again to be false.

I do not now why people bothering listening to her insane ramblings.

if she was right, salmon would have vanished years ago.

[Reply](#)

21 12 2011



ISA virus antigens — by mail! « Salmon Farm Science (11:37:40) : [edit](#)

[...] About this blog [...]

[Reply](#)

9 11 2011



bigcitylib (04:32:47) : [edit](#)

Quite true, but anyone who makes an effort can find out I’m M.J. Murphy of Toronto. How about you?

Incidentally, the BC salmon farmers have never heard of you,

[Reply](#)

9 11 2011



salmonfarmscience (08:15:29) : [edit](#)

So what’s your point? Do you have a question about the content here? We are here to talk about science.

[Reply](#)

19 12 2011



[Matt Toma](#) (16:40:43) : [edit](#)

If you are here to talk about science, what is your educational background ?

I am an accountant, and as such, when I speak about accounting, I explain my educational background to my listeners.

This answer does not speak to transparency.

19 12 2011



[salmonfarmscience](#) (17:05:39) : [edit](#)

Hi Matt, we're people who work in salmon farming who don't want the medium to become the message.

8 11 2011



[bigcitylib](#) (17:49:30) : [edit](#)

So, you being anonymous and all, are we going to find out in a few months that you are a FLOG for The B.C. Salmon Farmers Association?

[Reply](#)

8 11 2011



[salmonfarmscience](#) (18:37:11) : [edit](#)

This blog is about science and salmon farming. As we explain above. Who are you exactly? Your blog seems to be anonymous too. We explain our reasons and motivations above. What are yours, especially for jumping to conclusions?

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[Silversides Fishing \(@sturgeonguide\)](#) (10:36:05) : [edit](#)

of course they are bigcitylib and did you know that the recent Mainstream vs Staniford court case caught the BC Salmon farmers Ass. lying on the stand and in newspaper ads they ran? These people use the tactics of grade school bullies and the tobacco industry of 1950's – 60's.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (10:54:32) : [edit](#)

Silversides Fishing, we have approved this comment so you can see we are open to discussion, but from this point on we will be deleting any of your comments which are spammy, abusive (most of them seem to

fit this category unfortunately) or otherwise useless to the topic at hand.

24 10 2011



Olav moberg (22:26:21) : [edit](#)

Fair enough 😊

[Reply](#)

24 10 2011



salmonfarmscience (14:30:58) : [edit](#)

Hi Olav, some of us work in salmon farming in B.C. and some of us don't. We obviously have a bias and acknowledge that!

[Reply](#)

24 10 2011



Olav Moberg (14:20:56) : [edit](#)

Who are you people?

I am just curious, as i cannot see names or organisations in your descriptions. Its not really important, as everybody is free to express their views, even anonymously, but still it is interesting to know who you are discussing with, if it should come to that 😊

[Reply](#)

19 10 2011



Suzi Dominy (17:06:52) : [edit](#)

Congratulations! It is usually the most hate-filled, disparaging, negative – and mis-informed – voices that make the most noise. It is good to see a positive blog about aquaculture. Aquaculture can do so much to fill empty bellies, save our over-fished oceans – and convert feed-in to food-out the most efficiently of any farmed species – there is so much GOOD to talk about.

We wish you the best.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Ed Henderson (13:26:45) : [edit](#)

Suzi – you really think BC salmon aquaculture is going to feed empty bellies? What about the bellies that used to be fed by the 5 pounds of wild fish, which is fed to salmon farm fish and making only 1 pound. This wild fish feed from halfway across the planet used to feed people over there – why are we stealing their food? Why not simply fish those 5 pounds and sell them on the open market? Wouldn't that be

better? Good chefs no very well that fish from salmon farms is inferior food – full of drugs, antibiotics, dyes and whatever other garbage the industry is filling these poor fish with -

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



salmonfarmscience (13:31:37) : [edit](#)

Off topic. This is the “about us” page. If you want to talk about fish feed, please find a post we’ve made about feed and comment there. Your next off-topic comment will be flagged as spam.

16 02 2012



Me (20:03:50) : [edit](#)

It is about time people stand up for *science* and not junk science *cough Morton cough* We have to start pressuring the news to brin back investigative journalism instead of who ever is the LOUDEST.

16 02 2012



a person who reads (20:13:05) : [edit](#)

Again. Reading is Good.

Salmon convert almost 1 to 1.
for the slow people. Salmon eat 1.1 kg of feed, and grow 1 kg.
sometimes it is worse, maybe 1.3 to 1. again for the slow
1.3 kg of food grows 1 kg of fish.

wild fish are not near that. Not even close. Also, the industry is working hard to reduce the amount of fish meal used in the diets.

12 10 2011



David (21:59:23) : [edit](#)

Thanks for the reply. I’ll be following along on twitter to see the progress. The AAC website is hosting a database of papers that focus on salmon farming that may be a good resource for future posts since the focus is on science. And that’s not just a shameless plug because it was my pet project 😊

[Reply](#)

12 10 2011



salmonfarmscience (20:47:29) : [edit](#)

Hi David. Thanks for your comment. We are people who support aquaculture as a concept, but support science more. We live in B.C. so salmon aquaculture is of course top of mind and will likely dominate

most posts and discussions here. We prefer anonymity for now, because we want any discussions here to be about science, not about perceived biases or agendas or personalities.

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[James Wilcox](#) (11:38:38) : [edit](#)

The concept of salmon farming is flawed from the very beginning;

1. Not sustainable given the amount of wild fish needed to produce fish meal
2. Overcrowding of fish (as with birds, cows, swine and humans) exacerbates spread of disease and other health issues such as parasites
3. Chemicals (including insecticides) are harmful to the farmed fish as well as to other plant and animal life nearby
4. Human consumption of farmed salmon is hazardous to our health.
5. Escaped farmed salmon compete with wild salmon for feed and spawning habitat
6. Waste from farmed salmon and excess fish meal devastates the ecosystem near the fish pens
7. The slaughter of thousands of marine mammals each year to protect farm raised salmon is inhumane!

The list goes on an on.

In other words, those who advocate for and support salmon aquaculture SHOULD BE ASHAMED; if not locked up for crimes to the environment and to humanity!

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (11:41:32) : [edit](#)

That's quite the list of naked assertions there James, but the body of science does not support any of them. [Please take a look through our library for yourself.](#)

16 02 2012



[a person who reads](#) (20:17:38) : [edit](#)

1. no. no.. salmon convert food amazingly well. 1.1 to 1 is common.
1.1 kg food = 1 kg of fish raised.
2. no. there are many farms who have gone years without feeding ANY antibiotics to their sites...
3. true, same with ALL food we eat.. get a grip.
4. you sound really stupid for saying that.
5. did you know the BC government released millions of atlantic fry in rivers TRYING to establish runs?
again you sound stupid.

6. no try reading the reports of sediment samples done.

7. most farms are and have moved to non-lethal methods of predator control. again, reading is a good thing.

sorry I was rude, but I was just replying as you did.

17 02 2012



salmonfarmscience (08:51:42) : [edit](#)

Thank you for your comments but please refrain from calling anyone ‘stupid.’

16 02 2012



Ed Henderson (13:19:03) : [edit](#)

to salmonfarmscience – your science is biased, the facts are clear that our wild fish habitats are suffering for your profits – those profits are putting locals out of work, destroying natural treasures and providing less nutritious food to boot. And, you want us to identify ourselves but not you? What kind of cloak and dagger maneuver is this anyway?

[Reply](#)

12 10 2011



David (17:50:20) : [edit](#)

Hi – When you say ‘we’, who exactly are you? I like the site but am having the hard time with the anonymity of the people behind it. Care to elaborate?

Thx

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



Silversides_Fishing (@sturgeonguide) (10:26:10) : [edit](#)

this page is created by who else- the salmon farming industry! Don’t trust ‘their science’ its all misleading and they leave out all the real truths just like the tobacco industry did years ago. Salmon farming IS NOT the answer to feeding 7 billion people. That is their big lie. It’s all about profit. Raising carnivores means you will always have to feed them more food than it produces thus creating a net loss of food for the planet. And about those feed pellets? What natural salmon eats chicken by products and feathers or GM soy? Sorry but farmed salmon is not natural and its not nutritious, but in fact contains toxins. The industry is also responsible for the decimation of millions of wild salmon in BC, Norway, Scotland and East coast of Canada by transmitting lethal highly infectious diseases to wild salmon from their extremely un-natural open net pens. Salmon farming breaks the natural laws of salmon and causes huge problems by creating perfect breeding grounds for diseases and parasites. The truth is available on sites that offer peer reviewed science, the ones that are not in it for the money but just want people to know the truth that salmon farming kills globally so a few can get rich. <http://www.salmonfarmingkills.com>

[Reply](#)

16 02 2012



[salmonfarmscience](#) (10:51:56) : [edit](#)

We have clearly stated on this blog that some of us work in salmon farming, some of us don't. No big revelation there.

You make many statements about science and about how ours is "all misleading" but provide absolutely nothing to back up your statements. [We have a library of science papers](#), perhaps you should read through them before you continue going on about things you have not researched.

Leave a Reply



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In quotes

"We must plant the sea and herd its animals using the sea as farmers instead of hunters. That is what civilization is all about - farming replacing hunting."

– Jacques Yves Cousteau

"We live in a society exquisitely dependent on science and technology, in which hardly anyone knows anything about science and technology."

– Carl Sagan

Twitter updates

- SITE UPDATE! New discussion page. [#salmon #aquaculture #science http://t.co/dnsjDzxK 1 hour ago](#)
- RT [@maisondesfleur](#): 2 small earthquakes rattle Vancouver Island - British Columbia - CBC News [http://t.co/NcGB2A2O 4 hours ago](#)
- And they wonder why we're anonymous! Looks like the [@salmonaresacred](#) gang found our blog! [http://t.co/MpGegpej #salmon #aquaculture #science 20 hours ago](#)
- On the Scottish sea floor: new [#science](#) looks at benthic impacts of [#salmon #aquaculture](#) and doesn't find much [http://t.co/GesyWp9P 1 day ago](#)

- Juvenile pink salmon under the microscope: a new study [#salmon #aquaculture #science](#)
<http://t.co/rqk96dWm> 1 day ago

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No spam, thanks

909

spam comments

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