



## Europe's biggest offshore mussel farmer looking for new markets

Company working to expand production to 10,000 tons of mussels a year.

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February saw the launch of Europe's biggest mussels offshore farm in the southwest of Lagos, Algarve in Portugal.

In a nearly 400 hectares semi-submerged production, about 6 to 8 meters under the sea, Portuguese company Testa & Cunhas is currently producing more than 1,000 metric tons of mussels (*Mytilus Galloprovincialis* and *Mytilus Edulis*) a year, and is now looking for new clients.

In the future, production will increase tenfold, Isabel Boix, project manager at Servimar Innova, the company providing the system for the farm, told **IntraFish**.

"The farm is divided into 10 production areas," she said. "At the moment we're only running one."

Construction at the second area is currently underway, and the company is now looking for big retail contracts across Europe, she said.



"The first batch was for the local market in Spain but with production capacity ramping up, Testa & Cunhas is looking to export its products to Germany, France and other European markets," Boix said.

"The company needs a big contract, and some regularity," she added.

Boix said everyone was surprised to be able to harvest market-size mussels in July this year, only six months after seeding the ropes.

Between 70 and 130 pieces are harvested per kilogram, and contain 25 to 30 percent flesh. The mussels are processed straight on the boat after harvesting over night.

"The taste is excellent," Boix said, adding the quality of the water and current in the area is part of the reason for the quick growth. In addition, the company is only using natural seeds, collected in the area.

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