



## OUR STORY

# Cantho Import-Export Seafood JSC.: We dare to take the challenges



*Caseamex is the first company in Vietnam, which exports pangasius. Now that we got our farm ASC certified, the profile of our company could improve and we are confident that with ASC we can meet the (social and ecological) requirements of our customers.*

**Mr. Le Thanh Duoc**  
*Vice General Director of Cantho Import-Export Seafood JSC.*

### **Company profile**

Founded in 1988, Caseamex is one of the top 10 companies in Vietnam, exporting both fresh and frozen pangasius with 20,000 tons of products per year. Located in the center of the Mekong River Delta, Caseamex owns a hatchery farm, an aquaculture services center as well as fish farms and factories for the processing of pangasius. To increase the competitiveness for its products to importing markets, the company follows different quality control systems according to international standards, such as BRC, HALAL, GMP, SSOP, HACCP, ISO9001-2000, SA 8000, GLOBAL GAP, BAP and SQF 2000. In 2012, Caseamex was one of the pioneer companies in Vietnam, which applies the ASC standard. We talked to Mr. Phan Hoang Duy, the Vice Director of Sales Department, to understand why the company decided to get ASC certified.

**It came from our customers' need:** We exported a great amount of pangasius to the EU, U.S. and Brazil market. We know those are quality-demanding customers, therefore, our company always update the newest regulations and standards according to these markets. In 2011, some of our buyers asked if we have ASC certification for our products. Doing research, we learnt that environmental well-being is increasingly concerned by our customers.

After we have studied the ASC requirements, we realized that following its standards increases our opportunities for the most demanding markets and ensures a more sustainable business. In 2012, we decided to first apply the ASC standards to a 12 ha farm in Mai Dam commune, Vinh Long province.

**Supporting employees:** At the beginning it was difficult to motivate our workers to follow the new changes, but now they are happy as the ASC standards also regulate their working conditions. The workers get social welfare and health care. We also built houses for them with better equipment. Changes in social care motivate the workers to stay longer with us, and this helps us to reduce costs for re-training and learning time. The first investments seems to be costly but in a long-term, it reduces costs.

**We went through a lot of changes and we can see the gains of our efforts, especially the long-term benefits for the environment.** We have adapted several global standards before but none of these specifically required environmental friendly practices. Therefore, we went through some fundamental changes in our producing practices. For the first time we had to get waste water treatment from the pond so that the water discharge would not cause harm to the surrounding environment.

Potential diseases from our fish affecting other wild fish, therefore, could be prevented. Ponds were re-built to prevent leaking water or anti-biotics discharge. These changes increased costs of production, but when we saw the better impacts for the surrounding environment, we understand that this is the best way to keep our business going on.

**We dare to take the challenges:** Caseamex is the first company in Vietnam to export pangasius. Now, we got our farm ASC certified, our company's profile is increased to a next level to our customers and we are confident to conquer the most demanding market.

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