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Perspective

# Converting Organic Residues into Sustainable Feed Resources for Modern Aquaculture

**Elian Novak***

*Department of Aquatic Resource Systems, University of Pannonia, Veszprem, Hungary*

## DESCRIPTION

Rising feed expenses and increasing pressure on natural resources have encouraged aquaculture producers to evaluate alternative ingredients that can support fish and shellfish production without relying heavily on conventional raw materials. Waste-to-feed technology has emerged as an effective approach that transforms organic residues from agriculture, food processing, seafood industries, and related sectors into valuable feed ingredients. Instead of disposing of materials that still contain proteins, carbohydrates, lipids, vitamins, and minerals, these resources can be processed into safe nutritional products suitable for aquatic animals. This concept contributes to efficient resource use while reducing environmental impacts associated with organic waste disposal.

Organic residues generated every day include fruit peels, vegetable trimmings, cereal by-products, brewery grains, oilseed cakes, seafood processing remnants, and plant residues from food manufacturing. Many of these materials possess nutritional value that remains unused after the primary product has been removed. Appropriate processing techniques convert these materials into stable feed ingredients with improved digestibility and longer storage life. This method reduces dependence on ingredients such as fishmeal while creating additional economic opportunities for industries that generate large volumes of organic waste.

Another valuable approach involves insect production using organic residues as the feeding substrate. Black soldier fly larvae convert food waste into biomass rich in protein and lipids. The harvested larvae can be dried and processed into meal suitable for many cultured aquatic species. The remaining residue from insect production also contains nutrients that may serve agricultural purposes, allowing efficient utilization of nearly every component of the original organic material. This production model creates two useful products from materials that would otherwise require disposal.

Single-cell proteins produced from yeast, bacteria, or microalgae represent another direction for waste-to-feed technology. Industrial by-products rich in carbohydrates can serve as substrates for microbial growth. After cultivation, microbial biomass is collected, dried, and blended into aquaculture diets. These protein sources often possess favorable amino acid profiles and may contain vitamins or bioactive compounds that contribute to normal physiological functions in aquatic animals.

The nutritional composition of recycled materials may differ between production batches because of seasonal changes, crop varieties, and processing methods. Manufacturers therefore conduct routine chemical analyses to determine protein, lipid, fiber, moisture, ash, amino acids, and mineral concentrations. Feed formulations are adjusted according to these analytical results so cultured animals receive balanced nutrition throughout the production cycle.

Digestibility represents another important factor influencing feed quality. Some agricultural residues contain cellulose or lignin that fish digest poorly. Mechanical processing, microbial treatment, or enzymatic conversion increases nutrient accessibility and improves feed utilization. Better digestibility also decreases nutrient losses into the surrounding water, helping producers maintain acceptable water quality within culture systems.

Economic evaluation consistently supports greater interest in waste-to-feed technology. Feed commonly represents the largest operational expense in commercial aquaculture. Replacing a portion of conventional ingredients with carefully processed recycled materials may reduce production costs while maintaining acceptable growth and feed conversion. Financial benefits become more evident when local sources of organic residues are available, reducing transportation expenses and supporting regional supply networks.

Environmental performance also improves through this resource recovery approach. Organic residues placed in landfills gradually release greenhouse gases during decomposition. Recycling these

**Correspondence to:** Elian Novak, Department of Aquatic Resource Systems, University of Pannonia, Veszprem, Hungary, E-mail: elian.novak.aqs@upmail.hu

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materials into animal feed decreases waste accumulation while reducing demand for additional agricultural land dedicated to feed crop production. Lower extraction of marine fish for fishmeal production may also contribute to conservation of wild fish populations used as industrial feed resources.

## CONCLUSION

Waste-to-feed technology represents an effective strategy for converting underused organic materials into valuable nutritional resources for aquaculture. Careful processing, quality control, scientific formulation, and responsible regulation allow these recycled ingredients to support healthy aquatic animal production while reducing environmental burdens associated with organic waste disposal. Continued collaboration among researchers, feed manufacturers, farmers, food industries, and regulatory authorities will expand practical applications and improve the efficiency of resource utilization, supporting aquaculture systems that use available materials more responsibly and economically.