



# Barra makes world menus

THERE may be a familiar tasting fish on a restaurant menu in Amsterdam.

It is in fact the North Queensland barramundi, which has been shipped from Townsville to the rest of the world.

Barramundi fingerlings are being raised in hatcheries at James Cook University, which leases aquarium space to Cell Aquaculture, a West Australian based farming company.

Their product has

captured the attention of the Dutch and the Americans, who have become fond of fresh-tasting barramundi.

Cell's Townsville-based technical officer Leo Nankervis helped successfully ship 12,600 fingerlings to Mississippi earlier this month.

Of these baby barra, only one died during the incredible 40-hour journey, through Brisbane and Los Angeles.

The transportation

method? Believe it or not, they were shipped in foam Eskies.

"Yes, we use Eskies," Mr Nankervis said.

"They are styrofoam boxes, which we use to pack two high-density plastic bags with water and oxygen.

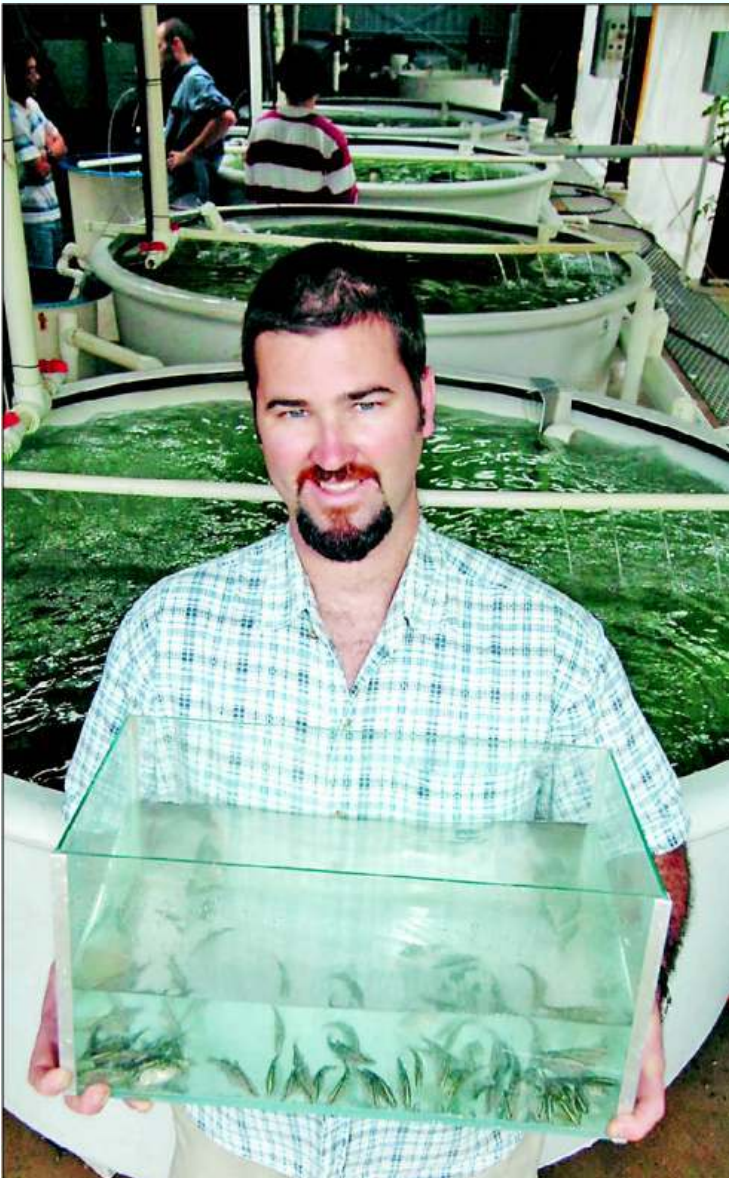
"But we are very, very happy with the results."

There can be about 100,000 fingerlings at the hatchery in each 'run' of farming. The barramundi are reared from their larval

stages in salt water, when they are about 1.6mm long.

They are fed micro-organisms such as brine shrimp until they grow bigger, and transferred to freshwater tanks where they grow between 30-50mm by the time they are ready to be shipped.

Mr Nankervis said the company was looking at rearing other species such as golden perch, which may also be shipped internationally.



CATCH OF THE DAY ... Leo Nankervis with barra hatchlings at JCU