

## **Closing Comments**

Robert L. Pritts, owner of the Laurel Hill Trout Farm, Rockwood, Pa. closed his presentation to the W.Va. Aquaculture Association by saying “The challenge of our industry thirty years ago was fish health management and we managed to resolve those issues. We moved into the 80’s to meet the challenge of genetics- how could we develop a strain of trout that would perform in our environment...and we did.”

“In the 90’s we saw an increase in sales and we needed to address ways to increase production, so we added aeration to accomplish that. Over the years we met the challenges placed before us and now we face another challenge that our industry isn’t quite certain how to cast a net around – and that is dealing with government regulations and organized groups.”

“State and federal agencies are proposing regulations that will increase production costs with little regard to how the producer can remain competitive. We have seen PCB advisories issued that have confused the public about fish as a safe food. Public policy decisions are being made without adequate scientific information and some organized groups are attacking fish farms by suggesting they are unhealthy and bad for the environment.”

“These are just a few of the challenges of the new era, while they aren’t directly related to producing healthy fish, none the less, if a farmer is going to survive in today’s aquatic atmosphere – they are challenges that need to be dealt with. Facing a challenge offers you the opportunity to do your best- and only by doing our best will fish-farming thrive in the future.