



U. S. Aquaculture

Why Is Aquaculture Important For The United States?

- More than 80% of the seafood Americans consume is imported.
- Almost half of seafood imports are farmed.
- Americans consume between 6 and 7 million tons of wild and farmed seafood a year.
- Demand continues to grow as more Americans seek the health benefits of eating seafood.
- The United States may need to import as much as 4 million tons of seafood by 2025, based on demand and population growth projections.
- Even with production from wild capture fisheries at fully sustainable levels, increased aquaculture production from domestic or foreign sources will be required to meet demand.
- Growing demand for seafood creates an enormous opportunity for economic growth and new jobs in the U.S. aquaculture industry.

The United States needs both wild and farmed seafood products to meet future demand for seafood. Working together, the federal and state governments, research institutions, the aquaculture industry, and coastal communities are exploring options for increasing aquaculture production in the United States.

What Is Aquaculture?

Aquaculture is the breeding, rearing and harvesting of plants and animals in all types of water environments, including ponds, rivers, lakes and the ocean. Similar to agriculture, aquaculture can take place in the natural environment or in a manmade environment.

Marine aquaculture is the culturing of saltwater aquatic species, such as oysters, clams, mussels, shrimp, and salmon in ocean waters. It also includes stock enhancement, which is the release of hatchery raised fish and shellfish to restore populations in the marine environment.



Florida Aquaculture



Florida's aquaculture industry produces perhaps the greatest variety of aquatic species in the country, including clams, shrimp, tilapia, catfish, alligators, and tropical ornamental fish.

In 2005, the State of Florida counted 401 aquaculture farms and recorded annual farm-gate sales in excess of \$75 million. Florida's warm waters and high natural productivity levels provide ideal conditions for growing clams. Florida has become a leading producer of farm-raised clams in the United States. Importantly, clam farming has brought economic revitalization to coastal communities in Florida.

Florida's coast is too shallow in most areas for offshore marine finfish aquaculture. However, the State is developing important hatchery and research facilities that support offshore aquaculture in states surrounding the Gulf of Mexico, Puerto Rico, and internationally. Florida is also working with partners on a redfish stock replenishment program in Tampa Bay.

Florida Marine Aquaculture Opportunities for Growth

- Clam farming
- Marine stock enhancement of redfish, snook, and other species
- Shrimp hatchery and grow out operations
- Aquaculture R&D at Mote Marine Lab, Harbor Branch Institute, and the University of Miami



Information Links

Florida Division of Aquaculture in the
Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
www.floridaaquaculture.com/index.htm

Florida Aquaculture Association
<http://www.flaa.org/>

Florida Sea Grant
<http://www.flseagrant.org/>