



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.



Louisiana Aquaculture



Louisiana's 873 farms recorded \$101 million in sales in 2005, according to the USDA's Census of Aquaculture. The State's producers lead the nation in crawfish, soft crawfish, oyster, pet turtle, and alligator sales. Additional species and products include catfish, tilapia, baitfish, hybrid striped bass, redfish, soft-shell crabs, ornamental fish, baby turtles, and a variety of freshwater game fish.

Businesses, aquaculture experts, and farmers are evaluating opportunities in the Gulf of Mexico to host projects for expanded coastal production of shellfish and open ocean marine aquaculture of finfish and shellfish. While Louisiana's oyster culture sector was hard hit by Hurricane Katrina, recovery is progressing.

Commercial evaluation is currently underway for species such as saltwater baitfish and cultured corals. Louisiana is the fourth leading state in production of catfish.

Louisiana Marine Aquaculture Opportunities For Growth

- Off bottom culture of oysters and rehabilitation and expansion of traditional oyster culture
- Restoration aquaculture for reefs and habitat
- Open ocean farming of marine finfish and shellfish
- Saltwater bait fish and farming
- Hatchery supply for marine finfish fingerlings and shellfish seed stock
- Seafood processing, cold storage, and marketing
- Employing idle fishing boats and fishermen in aquaculture production
- Production of water filtration systems for hatcheries and other equipment
- Aquaculture feeds
- Pharmaceutical and cosmetic products from aquaculture

Information Links

Louisiana Sea Grant

<http://www.laseagrant.org>

Louisiana Aquaculture Task Force

<http://www.ldaf.state.la.us/divisions/marketing/marketdevelopment/aquaculture/taskforcecontacts.asp>

Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station
Aquaculture Research Station

<http://www.agctr.lsu.edu/inst/research/stations/Aquaculture/>

Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries (LDWF)

<http://www.wlf.state.la.us/>

Louisiana Seafood Marketing & Promotions Board

<http://www.louisianaseafood.com>

NOAA Aquaculture Program

www.Aquaculture.noaa.gov

1-301-713-9079

