



## 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.



# Maryland Aquaculture



Maryland Department of Natural Resources

**M**aryland's diverse aquaculture industry produces shellfish, finfish, and crustaceans. Shellfish and crustacean products range from oysters and clams to crabs and crayfish. Finfish species cultivated in Maryland include trout, hybrid striped bass, tilapia, largemouth bass, bluegills, and minnows. Additional aquaculture efforts are producing shad, catfish, shiners, sunfish, walleye, yellow perch, muskie, terrapins, prawns, and ornamental fish.

A number of species are produced for restoration purposes, especially oysters and marsh grass. Research on blue crab restoration is also underway at the University of Maryland.

With growing interest and investment, there are increasing opportunities for further expansion of aquaculture in Maryland.



Maryland Department of the Environment

## Maryland Marine Aquaculture Opportunities for Growth

- Shellfish (clams and oysters) production and rearing for nurseries/hatcheries
- Biotechnology
- Land-based marine fish production



Maryland Department of the Environment

## Information Links

Maryland Seafood & Aquaculture  
<http://www.marylandseafood.org/>

Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center  
<http://www.nrac.umd.edu/>

Maryland Sea Grant  
<http://www.mdsg.umd.edu/>