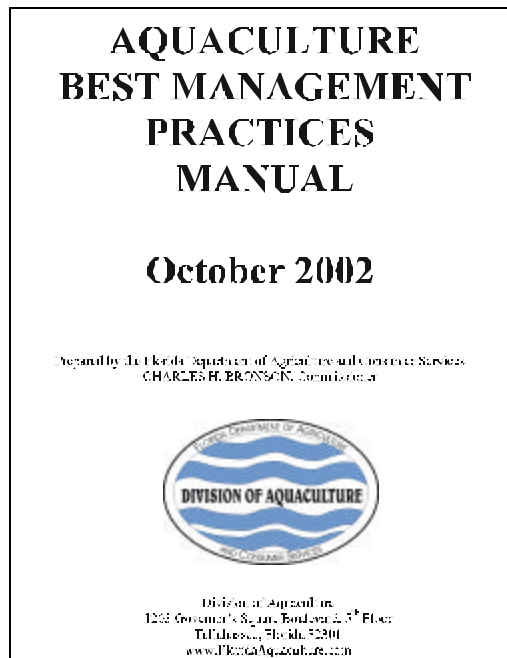




Revised Aquatic Animal Health BMP Adopted

The Division has revised the *Aquaculture Best Management Practices Manual* to consolidate and update Chapter VIII, Health Management. In concert with the Division of Animal Industry and a farmer advisory committee, all aquatic animal health management components in the previous *Manual* have been consolidated into one chapter. In addition to animal health BMPs specific to ornamental fish, shrimp, sturgeon, and marine bivalves, the revised chapter also includes:

- A new provision requiring the creation and/or maintenance of a facility aquatic health management plan that has been approved by the Department.
- Reminder that written authorization may be required from the State Veterinarian prior to importing non-native aquatic species outside the United States.
- A variety of aquatic animal health management practices.



The *Manual* is an integral component of Rule 5L-3, Florida Aquaculture Best Management Practices, Florida Administrative Code, and is subject to the provisions of Chapter 120, Administrative Procedures Act, Florida Statutes. The Rule and *Manual* became effective December 29, 2002. The new *Manual* has been dated October, 2002 to distinguish it from the old version.

The revised *Manual* is available at <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> as a .pdf document and copies will be mailed to all holders of an Aquaculture Certificate of Registration. Contact Kal Knickerbocker, 850-488-4033, or Mike Miltner, 863-519-8459, for additional information.

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ARC Seeks Aquaculture Proposals

The Florida Aquaculture Review Council, an industry advisory body to the Commissioner of Agriculture, is requesting statements of interest from investigators proposing aquaculture projects for funding during the 2004-2005 fiscal year. The announcement is available at www.FloridaAquaculture.com/BAD/BAD_ARC.htm. Statements of interest are due to the Division no later than March 4, 2003. Florida Statute mandates public-private partnerships, when appropriate, and a return of a percentage of the profit generated by projects for funding future projects.

The Aquaculture Review Council wants to stimulate the growth of aquaculture in Florida. The nature of proposals may include the development, coordination, and implementation of technical, market, demonstration, and educational projects. Participating organizations may include private sector and government organizations. Ongoing programs are not appropriate for

this process, only specific projects with definitive objectives and end-points. Areas of interest are listed in the announcement.

Selected investigators submitting statements of interest will be asked to prepare full proposals. The ARC will review these proposals in late spring and investigators will have the opportunity to make a short presentation to the members. The ARC will then prepare a ranked list of recommended projects to be submitted to the Commissioner, Governor and Legislature. Aquaculture projects must complete this process in order to be considered for funding. Selected investigators are responsible for seeking legislative support for their projects once recommended by the ARC.

The following projects were recommended by the ARC for funding in 2003-2004. The Legislature will determine which of these projects receive funding in during this spring's Legislative session.

- The cause and prevention of brown spot, and pix hide scars in alligator skins. University of Florida, College of Veterinary Medicine.
- Comparison of fertilizers, media and production systems for the culture of aquatic plants. University of Florida, Ft. Lauderdale Research and Education Center.
- Intensive, semi-intensive and extensive fingerling production of cobia (*Rachycentron canadum*) in Florida using tanks, mesocosms and ponds. University of Miami, Rosenstiel School of Marine & Atmospheric Science.
- One-stop web site for Florida Aquaculture. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Aquaculture.

For further information on the ARC project review process, contact Karen Metcalf (metcalk@doacs.state.fl.us or 850-488-4033). ARC members and their contact information can be found at http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com/BAD/BAD_ARC.htm.

Imported Sturgeon Fingerlings Doing Well

The Division and University of Florida (UF) are involved in a project to import non-native sturgeon to determine various aspects of international trade regulations, marketplace and fingerling performance. The project involves importing several species of sturgeon from various sources and countries to evaluate the vitality of the fish, modes of delivery and transportation, documentation, and other factors involved in securing commercial quantities of eggs, fry and fingerling from around the world. A second component of the project is a cooperative effort between the Division, UF and participating fish farmers to establish optimal conditions for fingerling growth.

Siberian sturgeon were imported from France during May. The 10,000 fry arrived in good condition and cleared U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Customs inspections at Miami International Airport. Approximately 5% of the fry were lost during shipping and about 20% were lost during larval rearing. About 7,580 fingerlings were successfully reared to the fingerling stage, demonstrating that the protocol for rearing fry to the fingerling stage was practical and feasible. The fingerlings

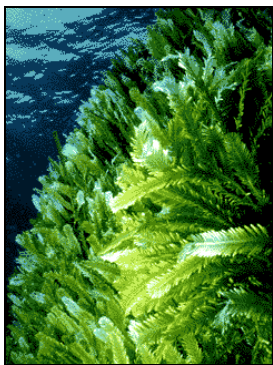
were then distributed to six fish farms for growth trials. The largest fish weigh about 300-350 grams after five months. We are still actively seeking participating farmers.

Fifty thousand Siberian sturgeon eggs were purchased from a Russian hatchery, but after spawning, the hatchery determined that the eggs were not in very good condition and we agreed not to buy this batch. Since it was already late in the spawning cycle for most sturgeon species, we decided to wait until the fall to receive another batch of fish.

We have received the CITES documentation for the shipment of Russian sturgeon eggs in January, and expect to begin another fingerling production cycle at UF when the eggs arrive. We will also try and buy some fry or eggs from an Italian hatchery; either Siberian, Russian or Adriatic sturgeon this fall. Efforts to obtain Beluga sturgeon (eggs, fry, or fingerlings) are uncertain. For additional information contact Mark Berrigan, 850-488-4033, or Dr. Frank Chapman, 352-392-9617, extension 247.

Caulerpa taxifolia Hybrid Response Plan Initiated

The Invasive Species Working Group (ISWG), a consortium of state agencies and organization that is coordinating efforts to manage invasive species and limit the introduction of new invasive species, is building upon the recently completed Florida invasive species strategic plan by formulating a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ISWG members and creating working groups to address specific issues.



Two subworking groups have been created. The first group will focus on education with Ken Langeland (University of Florida, IFAS) as the chair. A second group, chaired by Scott Hardin (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission), will develop a management plan for the anthropogenic hybrid of a marine macroalgae, *Caulerpa taxifolia*.



The formation of a ISWG subworking group to address the *Caulerpa taxifolia* hybrid is the first attempt by the ISWG to build a rapid response to a species. The importance of invasive marine plants was

highlighted further at the Invasive Species Florida Saltwater Systems meeting sponsored by Florida Sea Grant and held in Tampa, November 5th and 6th.

This meeting brought together participants from management, education and scientific organizations dealing with marine invasives. The meeting provided an opportunity for participants to discuss and prioritize issues of concern. A consensus was reached that a high priority should be placed upon a survey of indigenous and nonindigenous species currently established in Florida. Discussions at the meeting further highlighted a need to increase the awareness of the public regarding invasive marine species. The timing of these discussions, coincident with the formation of functioning ISWG subworking groups, suggests that ISWG can play a valuable role marine invasive species educational outreach efforts in the future. Visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/invaspec/2ndlevpgs/ISWG.htm> for information about the ISWG and the statewide invasive species management plan. For additional information contact Dr. John Teem, 850-488-4033 or teemj@doacs.state.fl.us.

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Biosecurity Planning Encouraged

The Agricultural Retailers Association, CropLife America, The Fertilizer Institute and the American Feed Industry Association have published a variety of planning documents to assist farmers, distributors and retailers re-examine their operations to improve biosecurity practices.

The Agricultural Retailers Association, CropLife America and The Fertilizer Institute, as the agribusiness security working group, developed the guidelines using a team of security professionals and industry leaders from manufacturing to retail in coordination with government agencies charged with chemical industry safety and security. The guidelines are available upon request, at no charge, from any of the sponsoring organizations and in .pdf format at www.aradc.org, www.croplifeamerica.org, www.tfi.org or www.afia.org.



BMP Notes

Florida Right to Farm Act Chapter 823.14, Florida Statutes

Limitation on Duplication of Government Regulation

It is the intent of the Legislature to eliminate duplication of regulatory authority over farm operations. Except as otherwise provided for in this section and s. 487.051(2) [exclusive regulation of pesticides by the Department], and notwithstanding any other provision of law, a local government may not adopt any ordinance, regulation, rule, or policy to prohibit, restrict, regulate, or otherwise limit an activity of a bona fide farm operation on land classified as agricultural land where such activity is regulated through implemented best-management practices or interim measures developed by the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or water management districts and adopted under chapter 120 as part of a statewide or regional program. When an activity of a farm operation takes place within a wellfield protection area as defined in any wellfield protection ordinance adopted by a local government, and the adopted best-management practice or interim measure does not specifically address wellfield protection, a local government may regulate that activity pursuant to such ordinance.

If you have a question about BMPs, call or send them to Kal Knickerbocker, 850-410-0875 or knickek@doacs.state.fl.us.

Florida Aquaculture Featured at Capitol

Thanks to a generous donation from the Florida Tropical Fish Farms Association, Commissioner of Agriculture Charles H. Bronson's office is now home to two large custom-built aquariums featuring freshwater and marine ornamental fish and invertebrates, aquatic plants and live rock.



Florida is the leading producer in the nation of these farm-raised products and the Commissioner is proud to showcase them at the State Capitol. Commissioner Bronson would also like to thank the Tropical Aquaculture Lab, Florida Aquatic Nurseries, Ocean Dreams, Sea Critters and ORA for contributing plants, fish and invertebrates for this display.

FAMU Seeking Aquaculture Expertise

Florida A&M University (FAMU), in partnership with the Citizens Network for Foreign Affairs (CNFA), is offering professionals in agriculture, agribusiness and business and marketing the opportunity to volunteer for three weeks in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Mozambique or Malawi.



Agribusiness Volunteer Program (AVP) volunteers work closely with CNFA/FAMU field staff in Africa to help farmers, agriculture associations and trade groups improve management and business skills. Skills such as beekeeping, forestry or fish farming are also needed. All assignment-related expenses are covered. Volunteers must be U.S. citizens. Currently FAMU is recruiting for upcoming assignments in all five countries. For more information about this exciting opportunity, please contact Gary Liebert, Recruiter, Agribusiness Volunteer Program, Florida A&M University, 204-S Perry-Paige Building, Tallahassee, FL 32307, telephone: 850-599-8867.

Division of Aquaculture

The Division of Aquaculture's primary responsibilities include certifying all legitimate aquaculturists through an annual registration, implementing a program of Aquaculture Best Management Practices to meet the State of Florida's environmental goals, managing 1.4 million acres of coastal waters for the harvest or culture of wholesome shellfish, implementing the National Shellfish Sanitation Program through periodic inspection of shellfish processing plants and product, and issuing submerged sovereign land leases for the culture of shellfish or live rock.

The aquaculture and shellfish industry can acquire assistance through a variety of means. The Division can be contacted by telephone, 850-488-4033 and 488-5471, or fax 850-410-0893. Tallahassee and the seven state offices are open five days a week from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. Offices are located in Apalachicola, Bartow, Cedar Key, Murdock, Orlando, Palm Bay and Panama City. Internet users can visit the Division's web site at <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> for industry and program information.

Florida Department of Agriculture and
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