

Red Tide Remote Sensing to be Tested

The Division and Mote Marine Laboratory have been funded by the National Sea Grant College Program, Gulf of Mexico Oyster Industry Program, to test the practicality of using remote sensing equipment to detect the presence and concentration of red tide organisms, primarily the dinoflagellate *Karenia brevis* along with other harmful algal species.

Over a two-year period, three *K. brevis* detectors will be operated in Pine Island Sound by Mote Marine Laboratory and the Division. The detectors, called "Breve Busters," distinguish red tide from non-toxic phytoplankton by using a miniature spectrophotometer and complex mathematics to separate and measure light absorbance by the red tide organisms.

Data from the detectors will be compared with laboratory-based analysis of water samples collected by Shellfish Environmental Assessment Section personnel from Murdock. The detector data will be reported, real-time, on the Division's web site. A second aspect of the project will be to evaluate equipment maintenance and durability in sub-tropical estuarine waters. Breve Buster designers will use this information to improve unit design and construction.

If successful, a second phase will involve deploying additional units to achieve the intense surveillance necessary to satisfy national shellfish management regulations. The second phase will also include analysis of operational costs and comparative red tide data to determine which method yields the most timely, accurate and cost-effective information.

Results of the first phase will be reported to the Gulf Oyster Industry Council, Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference and International Shellfish Restoration Conference. The Florida Sea Grant College Program provides grant administrative support.

For additional information contact Sherman Wilhelm, telephone 850-488-4033, or Dr. Gary Kirkpatrick, Mote Marine Laboratory, telephone 941-388-4441. The *K. brevis* image supplied by the Florida Marine Research Institute.

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State of Florida Budget Process

Budgeting by the State of Florida can be a confusing process. The only Constitutionally mandated task the Legislature must accomplish during the 60 day session is to pass a budget. The legislative session began on March 4, 2003. The budget must be approved by both houses of the legislature and signed by the Governor.

Here is a simplistic view of the state budgeting process. Each agency submits to the Legislature and the Governor a budget request for the next fiscal year. After submission by the agencies, the Governor and Legislature separately review the requests. The Governor then submits a recommended budget to the Legislature. The Legislature reviews the Governor's budget as well as the agency budgets when it starts its appropriation committee meetings in the House and Senate. At the appropriation committee meetings, agency staff and Governor's staff present their recommendations and answer

questions on their respective budget submissions.

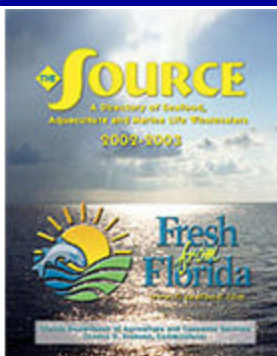
The legislative budget process usually requires almost all of the 60 day session to complete. The process takes this long because the state budget covers many agencies; a revenue estimating group that predicts tax collections for the next fiscal year does not issue its final projection until May; and the House, Senate, Governor and agency budgets rarely agree. Consequently, the two houses appoint members to one conference committee to write a single budget that both houses can agree to pass. Their conference report, consisting of another budget, is sent to the Governor. The Governor can sign it or he can veto all or parts of it. If the conference budget, or any part is vetoed, that action is final unless the Legislature, at its next session, overrides the veto by bringing the vetoed provisions back up for a vote and passing them again in each house by a two-thirds vote.

This is a simplified description. There are multiple steps in the budget process during which interested parties can interject information and be heard. This description does not detail the subcommittee, committee, Speaker of the House and President of the Senate interactions. Suffice to say that the budget starts in subcommittees and moves up as time goes on. The budget does this twice in each house, the first time with the original budget and the second time in the conference committee.

Visit <http://www.leg.state.fl.us> for information about the Senate and House, legislative committees, bills and session calendar. You may also wish to use a toll free number maintained by the Legislature, 1-800-342-1827.



Tap into Local, State, National and International Aquaculture Marketing Services



The Bureau of Seafood and Aquaculture Marketing in the Division of Marketing provides information to the Florida seafood and aquaculture industry to buy, sell, and market *Fresh from Florida* seafood and aquaculture products.

The mission of the Bureau is twofold: market Florida product

to consumers and increase seafood and aquaculture industries sales. The Bureau of Seafood and Aquaculture Marketing has been serving the industry and consumers for over 30 years. Bureau services include producing educational materials for consumers to be informed shoppers and experienced chefs, and provide promotional materials, supplier directories and training on handling and storage safety for retailers, foodservice, wholesalers and

processors. The Bureau also provides educational and technical support and training for fishermen, aquaculturists, retailers and foodservice. The Bureau serves as a liaison for aquaculturists, commercial fishermen, government agencies and consumers by utilizing the expertise of industry advisory councils. The Bureau provides public relations to the media on behalf of the seafood, aquaculture and marine life industries, including electronic marketing programs identifying U.S. and international buying and selling operations, and assisting and promoting Florida industry through the distribution of recipe brochures and educational materials to visitors at seafood festivals throughout the state and at industry trade events, domestically and abroad.

Two recent Bureau initiatives are designed to assist Florida clam farmers and tropical fish farmers. An education and information program for Florida clam farmers has

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EPA Aquaculture Effluents Update

This past February marked the fourth anniversary of EPA's effort, started in February 1999, to study aquaculture (commercial and public facilities) and reconsider current national effluent guidelines that are provided to the states and EPA regional offices to enforce the Clean Water Act.

The draft effluent guidelines released for public comment on September 12, 2002 generated 303 written comments. EPA has categorized the comments as being 123 form letters from the Center for Food Safety, 54 farmer comments, 43 comments from organizations that produce aquatic species (private and public), 37 state agency comments, 25 comments from students and individuals, eight comments from environmental advocate organizations, five federal agency comments, six comments from universities or extension programs, one comment from a law firm and a comment from the Joint Subcommittee on Aquaculture's Aquaculture Effluent Task Force (AETF). The AETF submitted 195 pages of materials plus additional reference papers. These materials were peer-reviewed and prioritized to complement EPA's list of topics for which they were seeking information.

The in-depth production questionnaire distributed by EPA to public and private facilities during June 2002 has yielded 182 responses out of the 250 questionnaires that were mailed. Follow-up notices have been sent and data analysis has not started.

The AETF is currently working to fill information gaps that still exist. One effort is to provide a trout production economic analysis. Farmers and extension specialists in Idaho and North Carolina are participating in this intensive six month effort. A second effort involves an analysis and guidance concerning the use of best management practices as a national regulatory tool. A third effort consists of gathering National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit data from aquaculture facilities that are reporting monitoring data.

The next steps in the effluent guideline development process will be a release of Notice of Data Availability (NODA) by EPA in September or October of this year. Comments can be provided at that time on the data that EPA has used (facility questionnaires, on-site sampling, economic modeling and scientific literature) to support regulatory changes. These comments will shape the final rule that is scheduled for release in June 2004.

Information related to this process, current and historical, is available from the AETF web site (<http://ag.ansc.purdue.edu/aquanic/jsa/effluents/index.html>) or from EPA's web site (<http://www.epa.gov/guide/aquaculture>).

Division Welcomes New Employee



The Division is pleased to announce the hiring of Ernest L. (Buddy) Levins as supervisor of the Shellfish Plant Inspectors to replace Bobby Bickley. Buddy joined the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in 1981 as a meat inspector with the Division of Animal Industry. He transferred to the Division of Inspection in January 1989

and continued to work as an inspector until he was promoted in 1993 as a District Supervisor. During March 1996 he was again promoted to Sanitation and Safety Administrator with responsibility for the Bottled Water, Packaged Ice and Vended Water Programs for the Division of Food Safety and moved to Tallahassee. Buddy will supervise an Environmental Specialist III who serves as the State Standardization Officer and the four shellfish sanitation specialists that periodically inspect 123 certified shellfish plants. Buddy can be contacted at 850-488-4033 or levinsb@doacs.state.fl.us.

Florida Hosting GSASSC

The Commissioner of Agriculture, Charles H. Bronson, is hosting the annual Gulf and South Atlantic States Shellfish Conference (GSASSC) during June 16-19 in Key West. GSASSC



represents the southern states of the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas). The annual meeting will include updates from federal agencies, presentations on current shellfish issues and updates on state activities. The nine states will be represented by their shellfish regulatory agencies. A discounted registration fee of \$125 is available until April 25; registration is \$175 at the door. If you wish to attend, please call Carrie Jenkins for a registration form and agenda (850-488-4033) or visit www.FloridaAquaculture.com and download the information. For additional information contact David Heil at 850-488-5471.

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been developed and implemented under a grant awarded by the USDA. The goal of the program is to identify and characterize the potential national and international wholesale, retail, foodservice and consumer buyers for Florida farm-raised clams. Marketing strategies have been developed to reach these potential buyers using information gathered in focus group meetings with each buying segment. An educational training curriculum for market growth and risk management is developed for use by Florida clam farmers. Implementation of this information should enable Florida clam producers to maintain profitability and increase sales. Components of the program include participation in trade events, promotional materials including flyers, brochures, in-store samplings and advertisements in major industry periodicals

The **DIVE IN!** Aquarium Fish national marketing campaign was created to revitalize the aquatics industry by reviving previous owner interest and enticing new ownership of freshwater aquariums. The cam-

paign offers free promotional and educational materials to aquatic retailers and features entertaining and informative websites for hobbyists and kids. **DIVE IN!** is a partnership of the Florida Tropical Fish Farms Association, the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and aquatic industry companies. **DIVE IN!** Aquarium Fish is an industry-driven national marketing campaign designed to increase tropical fish and aquarium accessories sales and to educate consumers on the exciting world of aquariums.



For information on the many programs and campaigns offered by the Bureau of Seafood and Aquaculture Marketing, call 850/488-0163, fax 850/922-3670 or email seafood@doacs.state.fl.us and ask for the representative assigned to your specific region of the state.

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 1.1 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 aquacultural purposes.

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.

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