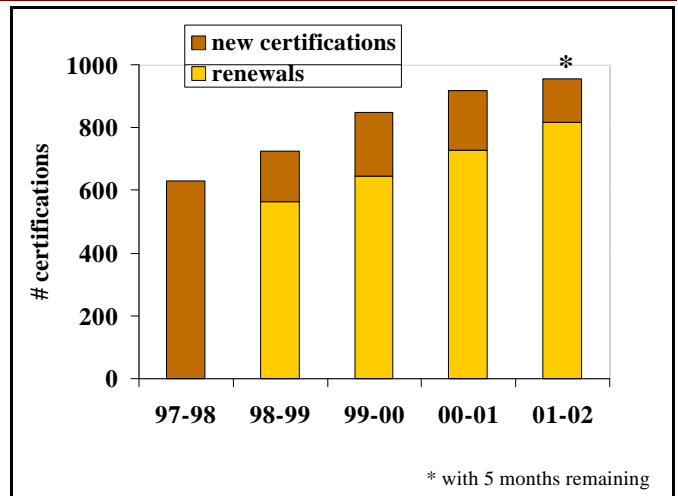


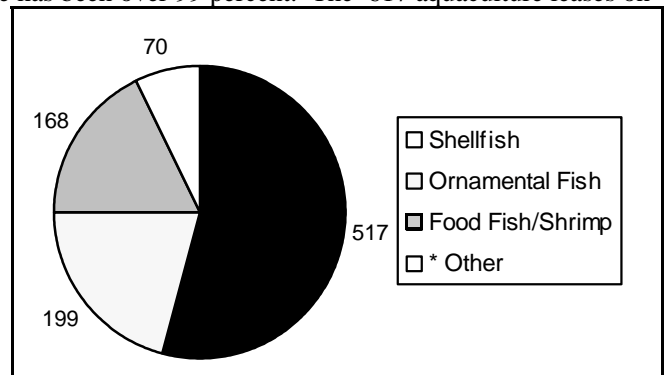


# Certification Continues to Grow

Any person engaging in aquaculture in Florida must be certified by the Department. The Aquaculture Certification program, which began in November of 1996, enables aquaculturists to identify their products as an agricultural commodity making them eligible for the rights, privileges and regulations of any other agricultural commodity. The bar graph shows the increase in certifications through the years. At the close of 2001 the Department certified 957 facilities.



A staff of four field inspectors conduct compliance visits on farms to ensure that all appropriate Best Management Practices are in use on the farm. The Division has made over 1,000 site visits to 541 land-based aquaculture facilities since 1999. These visits are used to ensure compliance with Aquaculture Best Management Practices. The compliance rate to date has been over 99 percent. The 617 aquaculture leases on submerged lands are inspected by the Division to ensure compliance with their lease conditions. Certifications are not issued for farms on delinquent aquaculture leases. For more information on the Certification Program, contact Kal Knickerbocker, 850-488-4033 or knicke@doacs.state.fl.us.



Number of certifications by product type (\* Other includes live rock, aquatic plants, alligators and more)

## Inside this issue:

Certification Continues to Grow	1
CLAMMRS Hits the Water	2
Marine Ornamentals 2001	2
ARC Pushes Federal Issue	2
Alligator Harbor Update	3
Shellfish Seed Workshop	3
Shellfish Reg Assistance Available	3
BMP Notes	3
Invasive Species: Snakeheads	4
BMP Field Demonstrations	4



# CLAMMRS Hits the Water

In four years we may be able to answer Jeff's question. A unique project to determine the biological and physiological needs of farm-raised hard clam and the water quality dynamics of lease sites has begun with the installation of water quality sensing equipment at eight different aquaculture use

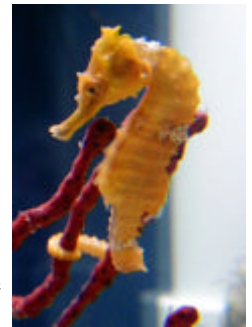
zones. This four-year project entitled, "Clam Lease Assessment, Monitoring and Modeling using Remote Sensing" or CLAMMRS, has the Division teamed up with the University of Florida, Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences, and the Cedar Key Shellfish Office. Division personnel in Tallahassee, Cedar Key, Murdock and Palm Bay have installed and will be maintaining remote sensing equipment that will collect temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll, turbidity, wind speed and direction, air temperature and rainfall. This information will be available on a real-time basis at the Division's web site for immediate use by farmers to make timely farm management decisions.

The UF research team will use this information to develop a farm-raised hard clam production model to identify optimum management practices and to monitor changes in natural food abundance and quality. Development of production models and a greater understanding of hard clam nutrition and physiological requirements will assist the Division in identifying optimum sites for aquaculture use zones.

The project has been funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture through their Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems Program. Our thanks to Bill Keane for permission to reproduce the Family Circus for this newsletter. For additional information about the Division's activities contact Paul Zajicek, 850-488-4033 or [zajicep@doacs.state.fl.us](mailto:zajicep@doacs.state.fl.us), or the University of Florida's activities contact Leslie Sturmer, 352-543-5057 or [lnst@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:lnst@gnv.ifas.ufl.edu).



The Second International Conference on Marine Ornamentals was well attended, with final conference registration of 283 people from at least 21 countries. The trade show and species exhibits provided a venue for new technologies and current industry trends. Presentations focused on several areas including aquaculture, wild harvest practices, industry certification and trade. Attendees rated the conference, co-sponsored by the Division, very high overall. All of the meeting abstracts, as well as the participant evaluations, are available on the conference website, <http://conference.ifas.ufl.edu/mo>. This web site will eventually be updated with the site of Marine Ornamentals '03.



## ARC Pushes Federal Issue

The Florida Aquaculture Review Council (ARC) is working with the Department to resolve a serious federal issue. Farmers, particularly ornamental fish producers, experienced severe freezes during December 2000 and January 2001 that had devastating impacts to many farms. The USDA issued a disaster declaration for 38 Florida counties on February 26, 2001, for the damages sustained from the freezing weather. Regrettably, one year later farmers still await federal financial assistance through the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program. As a result of a request from the ARC, Commissioner Bronson has asked that the US Department of Agriculture expedite payments for disaster claims. The ARC is looking for payments to be made immediately for last winter's freeze and has requested that the Farm Service Agency develop a standardized method for dealing with ornamental fish farms so that future claims are not unnecessarily delayed.

Information on Florida Farm Service Agency programs may be obtained from Kevin Kelley, State Director, Farm Service Agency, P.O. Box 141030, Gainesville, FL 32614 or on the web at <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/fl/>.

## Alligator Harbor Aquaculture Update

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The Division of Aquaculture is completing the approval processes for an aquaculture use area in Alligator Harbor, and plans to go before the Board of Trustees on January 29, 2002 to seek authorization to issue 46 aquaculture leases. The project was initiated to encourage economic development in the region when the Board of Trustees authorized the use of approximately 100 acres of sovereign submerged lands. The size of individual lease parcels was established at 1.5 acres

The Division, in cooperation with the University of Florida, conducted four public workshops to provide an overview of hard clam culture, inform prospective applicants about the application and review process, assist applicants in completing the necessary paperwork and allow qualified applicants to select individual lease parcels.

The Division evaluated 67 applications for completeness, business planning, background checks, and residency. Applications were considered on a first-come, first-served basis, with Franklin County residents having first priority and Wakulla County residents having second priority. Preference was also given to first-time leaseholders. The first 46 qualified applicants, all Franklin County residents, were selected for lease parcels.

Potential leaseholders have established a committee to seek bid quotations from surveying companies to survey and mark the aquaculture use area. The surveying company will be selected near the end of January 2002. For additional information, contact Mark Berrigan, 850-488-4033.

## Interstate Shellfish Seed Workshop

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A workshop is planned for February 21-22, 2002 at the South Carolina Marine Resources Center, 217 Ft. Johnson Road, Charleston, to harmonize interstate shellfish seed inspection and testing procedures amongst the 14 Atlantic Coast States. Three discussion panels will be convened during a day and a half to cover: 1) disease testing and shellfish pathology, 2) state regulatory requirements, and 3) shellfish industry issues. There is a \$75 registration fee. For workshop information contact Bill Anderson at 843-762-5089, andersonb@cofc.edu, or Jack Whetstone at 843-546-6321, jwhstn@clemson.edu.

## Shellfish Regulatory Assistance Available

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Dan Cavins is a technical expert available to answer Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP), Model Shellfish Ordinance, shellfish plant inspection and other shellfish processing related



questions. Dan has over 20 years experience as a food safety specialist. He will be working out of Tallahassee with shellfish processing plant owners and managers to provide nonjudgmental advice, technical assistance and guidance on a friendly one-on-one basis. Dan can be reached at 850-488-4033 or cavinsd@doacs.state.fl.us.



### BMP Notes

#### Farm Buildings and other Structures

Farm buildings and other structures may be exempt from building codes. Farmers that are planning to build new farms or add structures to existing farms should check the following Florida Statutes and consult with appropriate county offices.

Chapter 604, General Agricultural Laws.  
604.50 Nonresidential farm buildings.- -Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, any nonresidential farm building located on a farm is exempt from the Florida Building Code and any county or municipal building code. For the purposes of this section "nonresidential farm building" means any building or structure located on a farm that is not used as a residential dwelling. Farm is as defined in s. 823.14.

823.14 Florida Right to Farm Act.- -

(3) Definitions.- -

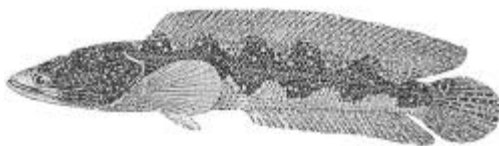
(a) "Farm" means the land, buildings, support facilities, machinery, and other appurtenances used in the production of farm or aquaculture products.

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

## Invasive Species: Snakeheads

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Snakeheads are elongated, torpedo-shaped fishes from tropical Africa and southern Asia that resemble the bowfin. The species have an accessory breathing organ that allows them to endure low dissolved oxygen and survive long periods out of water in a moist condition. They are aggressive feeders on fish and other aquatic species.



Snakeheads are prohibited in Florida, Texas and other states; however, snakeheads have been recently discovered in the United States. The northern snakehead, *Channa argus*, was found in Texas and Florida live markets and its distribution has been connected with New York suppliers. A bullseye snake-head, *C. marulius*, was caught by a Florida angler last October. Shipping snakeheads interstate may invoke federal penalties under the Lacey Act.

Species information courtesy of Dr. Walter Courtenay, USGS-Florida Caribbean Science Center, and Paul Shafland, FWC-Non-Native Fish Research Laboratory.

## BMP Field Demonstrations in the Works

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The Division has been awarded funds by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management Program to construct permanent Aquaculture Best Management Practice (BMP) exhibits. The exhibits will be placed at the University of Florida's Department of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences in Gainesville, Tropical Aquaculture Laboratory in Ruskin and the Cedar Key Shellfish Office. Farmers and the public will be able to use a self-guided tour booklet to view permanent signage and working BMP examples at each location. The exhibits will be introduced to the aquaculture industry during a series of workshops that will be held on dates to be announced later this year. For additional information, contact Paul Zajicek, 850-488-4033 or zajicep@doacs.state.fl.us.

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### *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 information 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, Palm Bay, Panama City and Titusville. 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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Division of Aquaculture  
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