



Shrimp Workshop Attracts Large Crowd

Approximately 200 people attended a Division-sponsored shrimp farming workshop in Bartow. Speakers from the Division of Aquaculture, University of Florida and industry discussed topics critical to shrimp farm planning, operation and management. Post-workshop comments by participants indicated they gained a greater appreciation of shrimp farming complexities and challenges.

Neil Aymond, Division of Aquaculture, provided an overview of Florida's Aquaculture Certificate of Registration and Best Management Practices program for environmental protection. For further information from the Division, North Florida farmers should call 850-488-4033 and South Florida farmers should call 813-519-8459.

Carlos Martinez, Aquaculture Extension Specialist, described sources of production and technical information from within the Florida university system and its connections with shrimp production expertise throughout the United States. Carlos can be contacted at 813-671-5230, extension 109.



Dr. Chuck Adams, Marine Extension Economist, provided an overview of shrimp production associated with large, coastal farms in Nicaragua. He can be contacted at 352-392-1826, extension 223.

Helen Dixon, Mariculture Inc., discussed bait shrimp production, aquaculture site evaluation, farm design and construction, and project development and management. She may be contacted at 941-722-7177.

Dr. Roland Laramore, Bonney, Laramore & Hopkins, Inc., discussed shrimp pathogens, analytical methods, disease management and farm disinfection methods. Dr. Laramore may be contacted at 772-465-2400, extension 313.

Lorenzo Juarez, GMSB Shrimp Hatchery, Inc., described production of post-larval shrimp and broodstock genetic selection. He may be contacted at 305-745-3738, extension 11.

David McMahon, OceanBoy Farms, Inc., described the trials and tribulations of getting a shrimp farm started and finding the money to plan, build, operate and manage a farm. He may be contacted at 863-983-9941.

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Vibrio Risk Reduction Plan Finalized

The *Vibrio vulnificus* Work Group has completed, and the Department has accepted, a risk reduction plan for oysters. The primary goal is to achieve significant reduction in *Vibrio vulnificus* septicemia illnesses through consumer education, processing incentives and, if necessary, processing controls. The plan was developed to meet an Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) requirement approved during their July 2001 meeting for states with two or more shellfish-borne illnesses that are traced to oysters.

Principal plan goals include:

- Meeting or exceeding the ISSC illness rate reduction of 40 percent for years 2005 and 2006 and 60 percent for years 2007 and 2008.
- Educational goals for retail establishments, the medical community (doctors, nurses and dieticians), high risk consumers and the general public.
- Increase the capacity for post harvest treatment by 25 percent for oysters intended for the raw, half-shell market during the months of May through September.

If the 40 percent illness rate reduction is not achieved, then the industry's capacity for post harvest treatment will increase to 50 percent for oysters intended for the raw, half-shell market during May through September.

Failure to achieve illness reduction and/or post harvest treatment targets will trigger "For cooking only" labeling, post harvest treatment processes or the product must be shucked.

Work Group members included representatives from the shellfish industry, academia, seafood trade associations and federal and state health agencies. The plan was accepted by the Department in early March 2002. Florida is the first state to complete a plan which will be evaluated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration during their annual Florida Shellfish Control Program review sometime before September 2002. For additional information contact David Heil at 850-488-5471. To read or download a copy of the complete *Florida Vibrio vulnificus Risk Reduction Plan for Oysters*, visit <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> and click on "Shellfish Harvesting."

Shellfish Processing Renewals in the Mail

Anyone purchasing shellfish from harvesters, shucking, packing or repacking shellfish must apply for and receive a Shellfish Processing Plant Certification License.

Renewals for the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 were mailed mid-March to 115 certified shellfish houses. The Department has asked that each renewal include the following items:

1. A completed application form.
2. A signed and dated Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan. Applicants should review and update their HACCP plan prior to submission.
3. A current copy of the Wholesale Saltwater Products Dealer License.
4. A current copy of an acceptable water/ice analysis.

Certification inspections will be scheduled on a first-come, first served basis beginning April 1, 2002. Applicants are urged to submit complete applications as soon as possible to facilitate inspection in a timely manner. For additional information, contact Bobby Bickley at 850-410-0840. For assistance with updating HACCP plans or questions related to shellfish processing plant operation, contact Dan Cavins at 850-488-5471.

Changes Proposed for the Comprehensive Shellfish Control Code

Extensive amendments to the existing Comprehensive Shellfish Control Code are proposed to implement authority granted to the Department to license or certify facilities for processing oysters, clams, mussels, scallops and crabs.

The principal changes are:

- Statutory authority is moved from Chapter 370 to Chapter 597, Florida Statutes.
- Adopt the National Shellfish Sanitation Program Guide for the Control of Molluscan Shellfish Model Ordinance 1999.
- Allow the Department to issue a stop-use order for unsanitary equipment.
- Describe shellfish relaying for marine biotoxins and public relay activities.
- Require Hazard Analysis Control Point (HACCP) training, knowledge or experience.
- To levy administrative fines or to suspend or revoke such licenses or certificates upon satisfactory evidence of any rule violation.

For additional information, or a copy of the amendments, contact Bobby Bickley at 850-410-0840.

Movement of Cultured Hard Clams in Florida Waters

To encourage the development of aquaculture, while protecting the environment and public health, the Department specifies a "reduced risk" policy related to movements of cultured hard clams. Both biological and public health issues were considered in developing the "reduced risk" policy. Biological issues include possible introduction of diseases and parasites, as well as possible relocation of potentially noxious biological life. Public health considerations include movement of hard clams while harvesting areas are temporarily closed and movement of hard clams from hatcheries and nurseries in closed waters to grow out in open waters.

The "reduced risk" policy allows free movement of cultured hard clams between valid Aquaculture Certificate holders, provided the hard clams are no larger than 16 millimeters (mm) in shell length. Hard clams that are less than 16 mm in shell length are treated as "seed stock". Hard clams that are greater than 16 mm are treated as marketable clams and, as such, different regulations apply to their movement. Market-sized clams that are harvested from leases when the harvesting areas are open must be delivered directly to a certified shellfish processor within specific time limits.

Hard clams that are larger than 16 mm in shell length and are harvested from selected waters that are closed fall under stringent public health regulation. The movement of hard clams in this category is regulated under the criteria for "relaying" shellfish. Relaying can only be conducted under the conditions of a "special activity license" and requires an approved laboratory and the supervision of an "approved relay monitor". For additional information, contact Mark Berrigan or David Heil at 850-488-5471.

Public Comment Sought on Draft Invasive Species Plan

A public examination and comment period on the draft Statewide Invasive Species Management Plan for Florida began on March 6, 2002 and will end on April 26, 2002. All state residents are urged to attend the Orlando public comment hearing and provide oral and/or written comments. The location for a public hearing on the draft plan will be at the University of Central Florida's Student Union Building, Key West Room 218 ABCD, in Orlando on Friday, April 26, 2002 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.

The plan and the public notice, as pdf files, are posted at the Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Invasive Plant Management, website along with directions to the public hearing (<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/invaspec/index.htm>). For hard copies call Don Schmitz, 850-488-5631.

AVMA Considers Health Management BMP

The Division has asked the Aquaculture and Seafood Advisory Committee of the American Veterinary Medical Association to recognize the equivalence of Florida's tropical ornamental fish health management Best Management Practice in place of certificates of inspection.

Acquiring certificates of inspection is a costly and time consuming effort that is not balanced by the human or aquatic animal health risks posed by tropical ornamental fish. After 80 years of marketing tropical ornamental fish within the United States and 40 years of international trade, there has not been a single instance of human or animal health related effects.

The Committee will examine Florida's program with the goal of proving consistency between statutes, codes, policies, and programs at the international, national, state and local (including farm/operation) levels while accommodating the unique nature of the tropical fish business, and, in the case of states and other countries, sovereign rights.



BMP Notes

Records Management

On-farm records management is an important component of the Aquaculture BMP program. BMPs require the following records and minimum retention periods. The Division's BMP compliance inspectors will be asking to review these records during compliance visits.

<u>Species</u>	<u>Records</u>	<u>Retention</u>
Live Shrimp and Prawns	Health Certificate Purchase record Sales records	Two years
Bivalve Molluscs	Health Certificate Parental genetics Purchase records Seed sales	Two years
Sturgeon	Health Certificate Purchase records Sales records	Two years
Live Restricted Species	Sales records	Two years

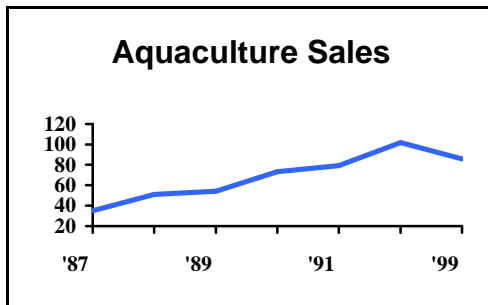
If you have a question about BMPs, call or send them to Kal Knickerbocker, 850-410-0875 or knickek@doacs.state.fl.us.

Participate in the 2002 Florida Aquaculture Survey

The Florida Agricultural Statistics Service is conducting its biennial aquaculture survey for products, sales, farm size and labor. All known producers will be contacted by telephone.

Aquaculture has become a major Florida industry that is extremely important to rural towns and communities. Past surveys have shown that sales of Florida aquacultural products grew from \$35 million in 1987 to \$86 million in 1999. Florida ranks third in the nation in sales and second in the number of aquafarms. Industry, university and governmental leaders need to know if the industry is growing and which industry segments need assistance to sustain or enhance that growth.

All producer data will be kept strictly confidential and only used to develop product and industry totals. A report summarizing the results will be published in June. For additional information please call Jeff Geuder at 800-344-6277. For past surveys visit <http://www.nass.usda.gov/fl>.



Renew Your Aqua Certification

Aquaculture certificate or registration holders will be receiving renewal notification for the period July 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003 within the next few weeks.

All aquaculture producers must have a certificate of registration and implement Aquaculture Best Management Practices. Producers must identify their products with the Aquaculture Certification Number from harvest to point of sale. Failure to acquire a certificate of registration and/or comply with the BMPs constitutes a misdemeanor of the first degree and is subject to suspension or revocation of the certificate of registration. The Department may impose a fine in lieu of suspension or revocation. Producers that do not have a certificate of registration are prohibited from selling their products as being farm-raised.

For an application, copy of the Aquaculture Best Management Practices or information contact Kal Knickerbocker, 850-488-4033, or visit <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> and click on "Aquafarm Programs."

Division of Aquaculture

The Division of Aquaculture certifies commercial aquaculturists through an annual registration, insures compliance with Aquaculture Best Management Practices to meet the State of Florida's environmental goals, manages 1.4 million acres of coastal waters for the harvest or culture of wholesome shellfish, enforces the National Shellfish Sanitation Program through periodic inspection of shellfish processing plants and product, and issues 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 six 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 and Panama City. Internet users can visit the Division's web site at <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> for industry and program information, application forms and links to appropriate statutes and rules.

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