

# FLORIDA AQUACULTURE

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## TWO SIGNIFICANT BILLS PASS THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE

The 2005 Session of the Florida Legislature ended Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, around midnight and cumulated with the passing of the state's \$62 billion budget.

For a legislative bill, or the state budget, to become law the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House must sign each bill that has been approved by the House and Senate. Once signed by the President and Speaker, a bill is sent to the Governor for action. The Governor may sign it, approve it without signature, or veto. Because the legislative session has ended, the Governor has 15 days to either sign or veto bills. If he does nothing in those 15 days, a bill becomes law automatically on the 16<sup>th</sup> day.

Two substantive bills of interest that passed the House and Senate are HB 643 and HB 1855. House Bill 643 amends the sales tax law to fully exempt from sales tax the purchase of power farm equipment.

Specifically, HB 643 states that "(t)here shall be no tax

on the sale, rental, lease, use, consumption, or storage for use in this state of power farm equipment used exclusively on a farm ... in the agricultural production of crops or products..."

Power farm equipment is now defined to mean "...moving or stationary equipment that contains within itself the means for its own propulsion or power and moving or stationary equipment that is dependent upon an external power source to perform its functions."

Agricultural production is statutorily defined and includes aquaculture. There is one requirement to receive this benefit, the purchaser must sign a certificate stating that the farm equipment is to be used exclusively on a farm for agricultural production.

House Bill 1855, in part, creates the Oceans and Coastal Resources Management Act. This Act provides for findings, in-

tent, and creates a Florida Oceans and Coastal Council. The Council is to: perform a thorough research review (past, current, and ongoing) relative to ocean and coastal areas in Florida; develop a research plan that prioritizes the state's ocean and coastal area research requests; and develop a resource assessment of existing knowledge that all entities in Florida have relative to oceans and coastal areas.

The Council has various deadlines and reports due to the legislature and a pilot project was created to demonstrate the feasibility of collaborative research to produce marine species and implement new marine stock enhancement initiatives.

Both bills await action by the Governor.

### Special points of interest

- Lease transfer policy changes to benefit farmers.
- ISSC biennial meeting scheduled for August.
- Spring Viremia of Carp not found in Florida.
- Two additional shellfish food safety workshops announced for June.

### Correction

The front page article in the last issue of *Florida Aquaculture* did not emphasize that U.S. clams exported to Canada were subject to a 15 percent surtax by Canada. Please accept our apologies.

# AQUACULTURE LEASE TRANSFER POLICY CHANGES

The Governor and Cabinet, in their role as the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund, continues to be supportive of leasing sovereign submerged land for aquaculture purposes.



The Board did this because of the concern that there may be individuals acquiring leases not to farm them but just to sell them. The Board wanted aquaculture leases to go to individuals who will work them.

Several years ago the Board inserted into the aquaculture lease requirements a restriction prohibiting transfer of newly issued leases until the lease had been in effect for a period of three years. Those leases issued in Franklin County were the first to include this provision, and each subsequent new lease agreement, whether live rock or clam, will include this restriction.

In light of that philosophy, the Division has been recently directed to place a notice on the lease transfer documents that states: "Please note that any transfer being requested due to a sale of \$30,000 or more must go before the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund for approval."

When a request comes into the Division of Aquaculture to transfer a lease as a result of a sale exceeding \$30,000, that request must go to

the Board for approval before staff can effectuate the transfer. The goal again was to promote local farmers getting leases and not speculators trying to make a quick profit.

To further protect against speculation, the Board will no longer approve transfers of the same lease within a period of one year from its last transfer. This is the Board's way of emphasizing that farming is important and the State of Florida is going to help farmers. The benefits the Florida Legislature has granted aquaculturists are meant to be enjoyed by aquaculturists. However, special circumstances will always be taken into consideration if a problem arises.

For additional information, contact Mark Berrigan at 850-488-4033.

## SHELLFISH SAFETY WORKSHOP AND ISSC MEETING SET FOR AUGUST

### Shellfish Safety Workshop

Rapid advances in technology and the changing landscape of international policy associated with molluscan shellfish safety are unprecedented. To address the evolving science, a joint workshop is planned for August 10-12, 2005 in Point Clear, Alabama. This international workshop provides an opportunity to integrate scientific advancements presented at the International Conference on Molluscan Shellfish Safety with the Biennial Meeting of the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC). During this 2.5 day workshop, internationally renowned scientists will report on the most recent scientific and regulatory developments involving microbial pathogens. Most importantly, collaboration with ISSC will permit interaction between sci-

entists, industry and government and familiarize the international community with the US programs.

Workshop sessions will end at noon on Friday to allow time for field trips to post harvest processing plants, FDA laboratories or local beaches and attractions before the beginning of the ISSC Biennial Meeting on Saturday, August 13. For complete information regarding the meeting visit [http://www.masgc.org/issc\\_icmss/](http://www.masgc.org/issc_icmss/).

### ISSC Biennial Meeting

The 2005 Biennial Meeting of the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) will be held August 13 - 19, 2005, at the Marriott Grand Hotel Resort and Spa in Port Clear, Alabama.



The ISSC strives to foster and promote shellfish sanitation through the cooperation of state and federal agencies, the shellfish industry, and the academic community. The biennial meeting serves to satisfy an ISSC objective: provide a forum to resolve major issues concerning shellfish sanitation.

For meeting information, visit <http://www.issc.org/News/Meetings/ISSC-Annual-Meeting/index.htm>. For shellfish sanitation and ISSC information, contact David Heil at 850-488-4033. For current industry issues, contact Dan Leonard, ISSC Industry Executive Board Member Region 4 and owner of Bull Bay Clam Farm at 941-473-3292.

# SPRING VIREMIA OF CARP VIRUS (SVCV) UPDATE

BY KATHLEEN HARTMAN, DVM, PHD, USDA-APHIS

## SVC Voluntary Survey

During 2004, 18 states (AL, AR, FL, ID, IN, IL, KS, KY, MI, MO, MS, NC, NE, NJ, NY, PA, OR, WI) and Puerto Rico participated in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), SVC voluntary surveillance program. All goldfish and koi sampled in the survey were found to be negative for SVCV. Florida had nine goldfish/koi operations (11 sites) sampled in the '04 survey. APHIS extended the voluntary surveillance for 2005 and Florida again had nine goldfish/koi operations (11 different sites) participate (although not the same sites as in 2004). All Florida farms sampled in 2005 were also negative for SVCV. To date, five states (AK, FL, ID, NC, and VA) have participated in the '05 survey with many more states getting ready to submit samples as water temperatures reach the appropriate range.

Participation in the voluntary surveillance program did not certify or approve a farm as SVC-free. Farm approval for SVC-free status is a two year minimum process where farms are inspected twice a year for two consecutive years at the appropriate life stage of the susceptible fish species and at times of the year

when water temperatures are in the appropriate range for sampling (i.e., for SVC 50-68°F). The number of fish collected will be determined by the numbers of susceptible species (e.g., koi, goldfish and a few other carp species) and their location on the farm. During this two-year period, the farm site may only receive fish from a source whose health status has already been approved as SVC-free.

## SVC Diagnostic Testing in Florida

At this time, there is no laboratory in Florida that offers SVC testing. However, the Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Kissimmee is taking the steps to obtain USDA approval for SVC testing. A list of laboratories approved to conduct diagnostic testing and export certification of aquaculture species may be found at: [http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nvsl/labcertification/aquaapp\\_lab.htm](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nvsl/labcertification/aquaapp_lab.htm).

## Pending SVC Import Protocol

Other activity related to SVC is the pending implementation of the importation protocol of SVC susceptible species (live fish, fertilized eggs and gametes). Actual implementation of this protocol is currently anticipated to start sometime in 2006. The importation protocol will require

that naturally susceptible species [common carp and koi (*Cyprinus carpio*), grass carp (*Ctenopharyngodon idellus*), silver carp (*Hypophthalmichthys molitrix*), bighead carp (*Aristichthys nobilis*), crucian carp (*Carassius carassius*), goldfish (*Carassius auratus*), fathead minnow (*Pimephales promelas*), golden shiners (*Notemigonus crysoleucas*), tench (*Tinca tinca*) and sheatfish (*Silurus glanis*)] imported into the United States be free of SVC. This must be demonstrated by testing according to World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) ([www.oie.int](http://www.oie.int)) guidelines either on the country, zone or farm level. Fish species not listed will be exempt from the import requirements. Importation of these susceptible species must be accompanied by an official bilingual health certificate stating that all required certifications and tests were performed. The certificate must be signed by either a veterinarian or a certifying official of the competent authority of the exporting country.

## Would You Like More Information about SVC and APHIS Activities?

Please contact Dr. Kathleen Hartman at 813-671-5230 x119.

## “SHELLFISH NETS AND NET COATINGS” TECHNICAL BULLETIN ISSUED

The Division of Aquaculture, with the assistance of Leslie Sturmer of the Florida Sea Grant Program, and members of the Cedar Key Aquaculture Association, has published Technical Bulletin Number 4 entitled, “Shellfish Nets and Net Coatings.”

The Bulletin emphasizes that the discharge of pollutants to coastal

waters, estuaries, tidal flats, beaches or lands adjoining Florida's coasts is prohibited by state law. Coatings used to enhance the functions of shellfish production equipment (nets, markers, etc.) must not leach pollutants.

Other Bulletin information concerns shellfish equipment Best Manage-



ment Practices, a shellfish equipment approval process, and the responsible application, handling and curing of coatings.

For Bulletin No. 4 or additional information, visit <http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com> or contact Mark Berrigan at 850-488-4033.

**CHARLES H. BRONSON  
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*Benefiting commercial aquaculture,  
Conserving natural resources*



*The Division of Aquaculture's responsibilities include certifying commercial aquaculturists through an annual registration, implementing on-farm 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 and nutritious shellfish, implementing the National Shellfish Sanitation Program through shellfish plant and product inspections, and managing submerged sovereign land leases for aquacultural purposes.*

*Visit our web site,  
[www.FloridaAquaculture.com](http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com),  
for aquaculture, shellfish, and Division program information*

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