Key Players Inform Plan to Grow Connecticut Shellfish Sectors

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\textsuperscript{1}Connecticut Sea Grant  
\textsuperscript{2}UConn Extension  
\textsuperscript{3}NOAA NMFS Milford Laboratory

Milford Aquaculture Seminar, January 11-13, 2016
Connecticut Shellfish Initiative

- Multi-year planning effort to grow and protect shellfisheries, shellfish populations, shellfish habitats

- Focus areas:
  - Commercial shellfisheries
  - Recreational shellfisheries
  - Natural shellfish populations

- Primary product is a vision plan

- Goals, recommendations to achieve growth
Species and Geographic Focus

Harvested and non-harvested bivalve shellfish

- clams
- oysters
- mussels
- scallops
Key Players

Steering Committee (decision-makers) & interested citizens
- Commercial harvesters, associations
- Recreational harvesters
- Local, state, federal agencies
- Restoration practitioners
- Environmental organizations
- Extension, researchers, educators

Facilitators
- CT Sea Grant/UConn Extension
- NOAA NMFS Milford Lab
Process

Issues and Opportunities

Vision
Goals
Recommendations

Listening... Learning... Documenting...
Recommendation 16. Convene a forum to discuss ways to improve the State shellfish grounds leasing process.
Recommendation 19. Ensure the CT Bureau of Aquaculture has the laboratory staff, capacity and equipment necessary to meet existing needs and allow for future growth of shellfish sectors.
High Priority Themes

- Aquaculture & Fisheries Development
- Public Awareness
- Regulatory Environment
- Climate Change
- Water Quality and Shellfish Habitats
- Consumer Health & Safety
Shellfish improve understanding.
Public Awareness & Engagement

“All Things Shellfish” Theme

- Website
  http://shellfish.uconn.edu

- Conference

- Magazine Features

- Clam Dig Events
Public Awareness

Pilot Survey 2015

- Conducted at local shellfish festivals
- 4 questions
- Zip code identifier to sort responses
- age>18yrs
Q1. Which of the following are shellfish:

- a.) oysters
- b.) mussels
- c.) clams
- d.) scallops
- e.) all of above
- f.) none of above

Q2. Shellfish provide which of the following benefits?

- a.) cleaner water
- b.) shoreline erosion control
- c.) homes for marine orgs
- d.) all of the above
- e.) none of the above

Q3. In how many Connecticut towns is recreational shellfishing allowed?

- a.) 0
- b.) 5
- c.) 14
- d.) 24

Q4. What is the value of commercial shellfish harvest in Connecticut?

- a.) $3,000
- b.) $300,000
- c.) $3,000,000
- d.) >$30,000,000
### Average Scores on Connecticut Shellfish Quiz

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Percent Correct</th>
<th>Score (%)</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>All (n=295)</td>
<td>85.5 85.1 41.9 40.5</td>
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Q1. About shellfish ID  
Q2. About ecological benefits  
Q3. About recreational harvest  
Q4. About commercial harvest
## Q1. About shellfish ID

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<tr>
<td>Towns (commercial)</td>
<td>95.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Towns (recreational)</td>
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<td>Towns (inland)</td>
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### Q2. About ecological benefits

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**Percent Correct**

- **Q1**: 85.1
- **Q2**: 85.2
- **Q3**: 96.8
- **Q4**: 86.5
- **Q5**: 86.3
- **Q6**: 81.4
## Q3. About recreational harvest

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## Q4. About commercial harvest

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Public Awareness Matters!

R.I. support for oyster farming pays off in growth
By Alex Kuffner
Journal Staff Writer
Posted Apr. 5, 2015 at 12:15 AM

In 1996, Rhode Island’s aquaculture industry ranked last in the nation in acreage and production. Since then, the growth of the sector — primarily oyster farming — has been nothing short of extraordinary.

Governor O’Malley Announces Record 1.25 Billion Oyster Spat Production, Significant Progress under Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Development Plan

October 11, 2013

Gov. Gregoire announces new initiative to create jobs, restore Puget Sound

Washington Shellfish Initiative promotes clean water and creation of jobs in state’s aquaculture industry

OLYMPIA – Gov. Chris Gregoire today unveiled the Washington Shellfish Initiative, an agreement among federal and state government, tribes, and the shellfish industry to restore and expand Washington’s shellfish resources to promote clean-water commerce and create family wage jobs.
Summary

- Identifying ways to grow and protect shellfisheries, populations, habitats
- Having many, diverse perspectives is important for generating ideas
- Improving understanding about shellfish and shellfisheries topics
- Assessing knowledge and perceptions to target audiences, topics for public outreach and engagement programs
Acknowledgements:
CT Department of Agriculture
CT Dept. of Econ. & Community Development
CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection
CT Dept. of Public Health
Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
CT Northeast Organic Farming Association
Connecticut Seafood Council
Connecticut Shellfish Commissions
Long Island Sound Study
EPA Office of Ecosystem Protection
Harbor Watch
Industry liaisons
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Sustainable Food Systems LLC
USDA FSA and NRCS
US Army Corps of Engineers
US Fish and Wildlife Service

Funding:
NOAA National Sea Grant Aquaculture Extension & Technology Grant (NA14OAR4170086), CT Sea Grant Development Grant (PD-15-12) and the David and Nancy Bull Extension Innovation Award

Web: http://shellfish.uconn.edu
Contact us: shellfish@uconn.edu