

Alaska Mariculture Initiative

July 1, 2014 - June 30, 2016

Vision: Grow a \$1 billion industry in 30 years!

Alaska's mariculture industry (enhancement, farming, and restoration of shellfish and aquatic plants) could grow to \$1 billion in thirty years. Is this attainable? Absolutely – with a coordinated effort, public-private partnerships, and a strategic plan designed to reach this goal. The ex-vessel value of Alaska seafood in 2012 was approximately \$2 billion, of that the salmon hatcheries contribute roughly \$100-300 million, depending upon the year. Examples of other geographic regions with smaller shorelines yet significant annual aquaculture production are British Columbia (\$33 M), Washington (\$110 M), New Zealand (\$400 M), Norway (\$5 B), and China (\$54 B).

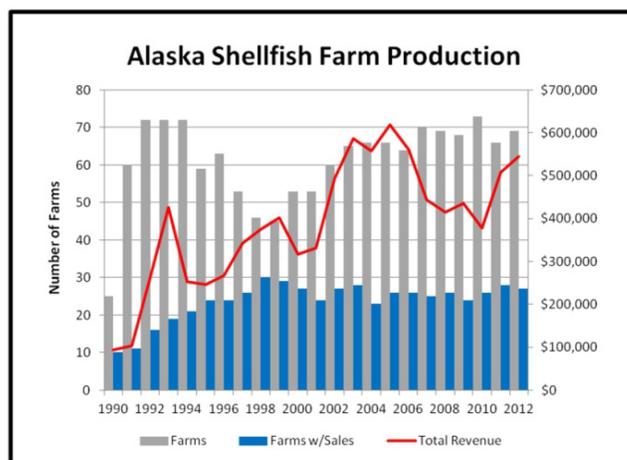
Problem = Unrealized Potential

Alaska has many strengths related to its marine environment: pristine waters, over 38,000 miles of shoreline, over 50% of the seafood production of the U.S., leadership in sustainability principles. However, Since the passage of Alaska's *Aquatic Farm Act* was in 1988, growth in mariculture has been mostly stagnant (see graph).

Solution = Alaska Mariculture Initiative

The Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation (AFDF) is spearheading the ***Alaska Mariculture Initiative*** to expedite the development of the mariculture industry.

The Initiative was funded by a grant from NOAA. As a part of the Initiative, AFDF will: 1) expand the stakeholder base and develop the partnerships necessary for the foundation of a solid plan and its implementation; 2) conduct a three-phase economic analysis of successful mariculture industries in other regions and how they relate to Alaska; 3) complete a strategic planning process inclusive of a broad spectrum of stakeholders and agencies (including coastal communities, industry, the State of Alaska, NOAA, and interested conservation groups).



Anticipated Benefits/Outcomes: The ***Alaska Mariculture Initiative*** will expedite mariculture development in Alaska through the creation of partnerships, a strategic plan and a mechanism to implement the plan, launching Alaska down the path to the creation of a new billion dollar industry based on a renewable resource with numerous economic benefits for communities.

Integration with Existing Policies: The ***Alaska Mariculture Initiative*** will also integrate with the following policies and priorities which have recently been adopted:

- ***National Shellfish Initiative*** launched by NOAA Fisheries' Office of Aquaculture in 2011 aimed at increasing the populations of bivalve shellfish through commercial production and restoration;
- ***USDA Investment Strategy in Support of Rural Communities in Southeast Alaska 2011-2013*** which identifies mariculture development as worthy of further USDA investment;
- ***Alaska Mariculture Development Prospectus*** (draft) published in June 2013 by the Alaska Department of Commerce as a means to generate discussion and ideas among mariculture stakeholders with the goal of creating a unified approach to move the industry forward
- ***National Strategic Plan for Federal Aquaculture Research*** (2014-2019) is an interagency strategic plan to guide Federal research in aquaculture.

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Target Partners



Challenges

- Remote areas - extremely remote sites which increase costs & logistics
- Infrastructure investment - seed production, growth techniques, product development require initial investment
- Organizational capacity - new & emerging industry lacks capacity & coordination to address challenges
- Workforce - lack of workforce requires recruitment, training, development
- Regulatory hurdles - perceived competing uses for sites & perceived environmental issues
- Environmental issues - sea otter predation & ocean acidification



Alaska Fisheries Development Foundation, Inc.

AFDF Background: Since 1978, AFDF has helped turn challenges into opportunities for Alaska's seafood industry by focusing on areas of research & development and by balancing economic benefits with sustainability principles. Successes include development of surimi in Alaska, fish oil research & development, encouraged development of over 400 value-added seafood products (including whitefish burgers, salmon bacon, salmon babyfood, salmon jerky), and promoted winning value-added products.

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