



noaa aquaculture program

U. S. Aquaculture

Why Is Aquaculture Important For The United States?

- More than 80% of the seafood Americans consume is imported.
- Almost half of seafood imports are farmed.
- Americans consume between 6 and 7 million tons of wild and farmed seafood a year.
- Demand continues to grow as more Americans seek the health benefits of eating seafood.
- The United States may need to import as much as 4 million tons of seafood by 2025, based on demand and population growth projections.
- Even with production from wild capture fisheries at fully sustainable levels, increased aquaculture production from domestic or foreign sources will be required to meet demand.
- Growing demand for seafood creates an enormous opportunity for economic growth and new jobs in the U.S. aquaculture industry.

The United States needs both wild and farmed seafood products to meet future demand for seafood. Working together, the federal and state governments, research institutions, the aquaculture industry, and coastal communities are exploring options for increasing aquaculture production in the United States.

What Is Aquaculture?

Aquaculture is the breeding, rearing and harvesting of plants and animals in all types of water environments, including ponds, rivers, lakes and the ocean. Similar to agriculture, aquaculture can take place in the natural environment or in a manmade environment.

Marine aquaculture is the culturing of saltwater aquatic species, such as oysters, clams, mussels, shrimp, and salmon in ocean waters. It also includes stock enhancement, which is the release of hatchery raised fish and shellfish to restore populations in the marine environment.



California Aquaculture



California's aquaculture industry is diverse, ranging from the production of algae and shellfish to freshwater and marine fish species. The majority of commercial aquaculture in California consists of freshwater finfish. Coastal aquaculture also includes farming of oysters, abalone, mussels, and scallops.

In 2005, California had 118 aquaculture farms worth an estimated \$69.6 million. California aquaculture cultivates such species as catfish, tilapia, trout, striped bass, mussels, abalone, and white sturgeon as well as baitfish and ornamental fish.

A tremendous amount of aquaculture research is conducted in California, including pioneering research on marine aquaculture and enhancement of white sea bass, rockfish, and other finfish species.

California is an emerging leader in U.S. development of farmed-raised sturgeon caviar. An area of growing interest is the offshore rearing of marine finfish and shellfish (e.g., mussels) off the coast of southern California.

Stock enhancement efforts underway in California include salmon hatcheries for restoration in northern California. In addition, the Hubbs Sea World Research Institute, Southern California Sport Fishing Association, and California Department of Fish & Game are collaborating on a white sea bass restoration program.

California Aquaculture Opportunities for Growth

- Offshore aquaculture of yellowtail, striped bass, mussels and other species
- Stock replenishment of white sea bass, abalone, and Pacific rockfish species



Information Links

California Sea Grant

<http://www-csgc.ucsd.edu/>

California Aquaculture Association

<http://californiaaquacultureassociation.org/>

California Department of Fish and Game

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/>

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www.Aquaculture.noaa.gov

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