

ECSGA Legislative Update



The 34th
**Milford Aquaculture
Seminar**

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Mission Statement

The mission of the ECSGA is to promote responsible **commercial** shellfish aquaculture through market research and promotion, active involvement in public education, participation in policy formation at the state and national levels.

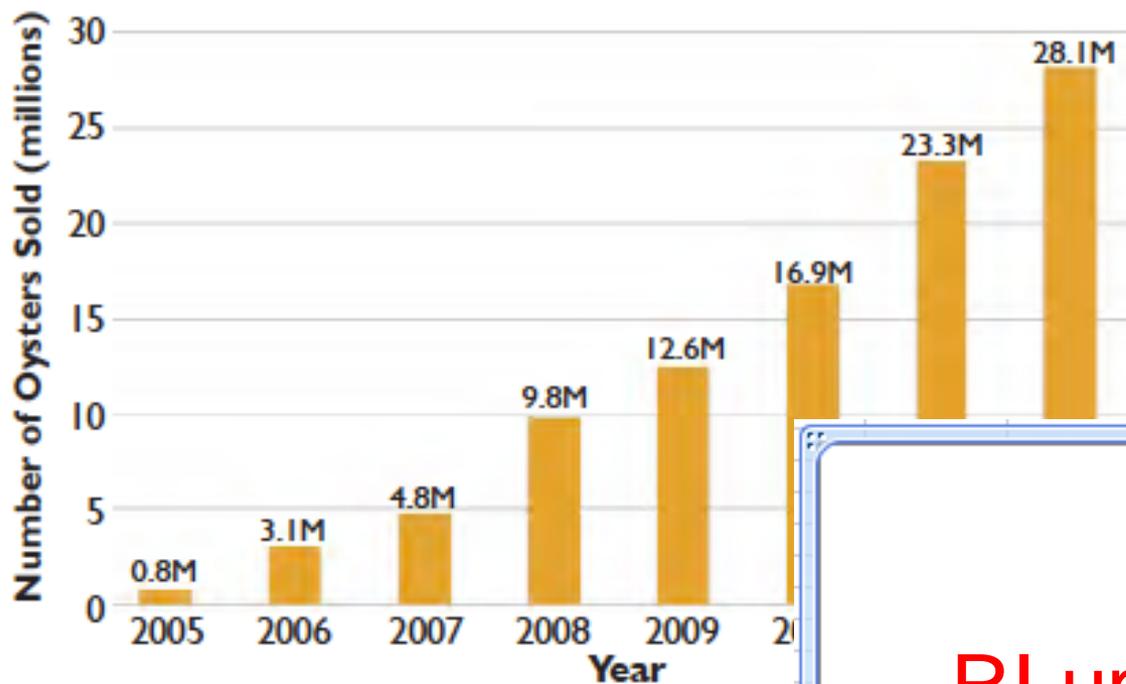
Industry Snapshot

- ~1200 farms from Maine to Florida
- Primarily small farmers with less than 10 employees
- Collectively harvest over \$123M
 - 60% clams, 39% oysters
 - production growing 5-10%/yr

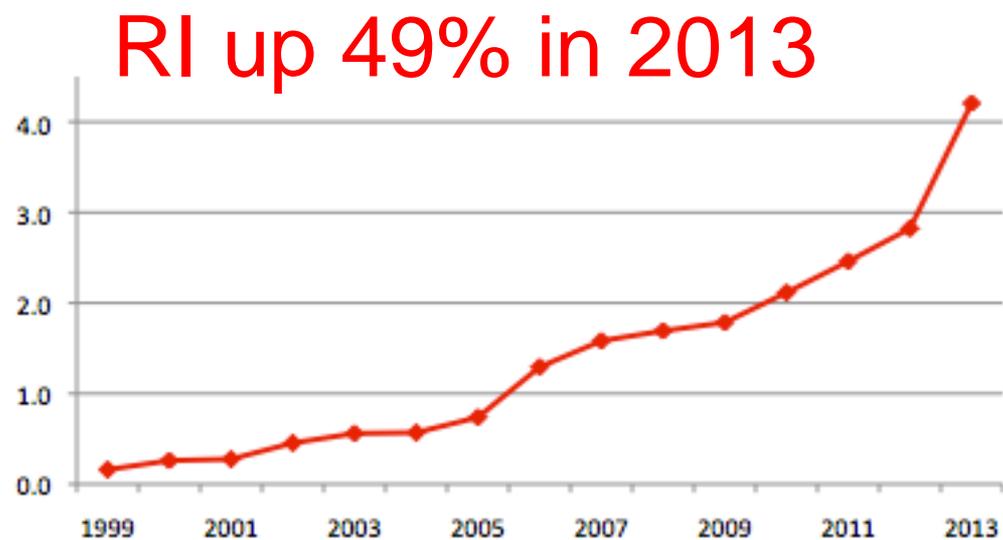
East Coast

- Oyster production doubled in the past 5 years.
- Sustainable seafood – with benefits
- Engine of green job growth
- One of few ways left to make a living on the water.

Figure 2. Number of Aquacultured Market Oysters Sold by Virginia Growers



RI Oyster Production
(Million \$) Farm-Gate Value



Annual Walk the Hill

Work with PCSGA and GOIC – NFI, ORP, OC

Coordinated message – Joint Agency Mtgs.
FDA, NOAA, USDA, ACOE, OMB

World Is Your Oyster Reception

Congressional Shellfish Caucus – Briefings,
Tri-coastal letters and Members Only Wine
and Oyster events

Member and staff meetings - “sprint the hill”

2014 Legislative Agenda

1. EU Trade Embargo
2. Specialty Crop Legislation
3. Vibrio Concerns threaten crippling regulations
4. Preserve research funds for critical needs
5. Protect clean water initiatives

1) EU Retaliatory Trade Embargo

- 2009 US audit revealed deficiencies.
- EU retaliated with a long list of concerns: Vibrios, HABs
- We asked FDA to audit 3 pristine areas to open for import to US to jumpstart process.
- No action for two years.
- Request: Focus on Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) eliminate non-tariff, regulatory trade barriers with the EU.

2) Specialty Crop Legislation

- Specialty Crops ~ \$50M block grants to states for research and marketing
- Simple change to the definition would restore shellfish
- Nearly passed amendment to Farm Bill
- **Request: Co-sign HR1590 and S754
The Shellfish Marketing Assistance
Fairness Act**

3) Vibrio concerns threaten crippling regulations

- Series of unknowns make regulation challenging
- Need tools to quantify and identify virulent strains
- Need tools that allow us to serve safe, live shellfish
- **Request: Direct CDC and FDA to direct additional research effort**
- **Restore educational funding to teach at-risk consumers about the risks of raw foods \$1M FDA-ISSC**

4) Critical Research Funding

- **Ocean Acidification – funded below House and Senate Marks**
- **Vibrio research needs**
- **Selective breeding research to improve market traits - ARS**
- **Preserve Research funding – NOAA, USDA, NIFA**
- **Fund OA research at President's FY12 level of \$11.7M - NOAA-IOOS**
- **Fully fund USDA Regional Aquaculture Ctrs.**

5) Support Clean Water Initiatives

- Clean water is a prerequisite for continued growth of shellfish culture
- Support nutrient credit trading - EPA
- Support National Estuaries programs and defend Chesapeake Bay Blueprint from challenges by “red states”

Message to Appropriators

- The New England fisheries crisis dominates the discussion.
- The value of cultured shellfish (\$103M) has surpassed ground-fish (\$80M). ME-VA
- Investing in ground-fish management will not create new jobs.
- NOAA Fisheries spends less than one percent of its annual budget on aquaculture research and development. ~\$6M

Message to Appropriators

- The emergence of a middle class in China has led to a 10 percent annual increase in seafood consumption.
- Projected global deficits of seafood by 2030 are in the range of 40MMT. (World Bank 2014, Darden)
- Global wild harvest is flat at ~85MMT.
- We import over 95% of the seafood we consume, adding over \$7 billion to the trade deficit.

Message to Resource Managers

- We import over \$100M in mussels from Canada and half again as many from Europe and New Zealand.
- We need workable regulations in the EEZ and a reasonable permitting process.
- We need research funds for critical needs (Ocean acidification, Vibrio issues, selective breeding).

Expanded Crop Insurance

- Lack of affordable commercial crop insurance puts producers a risk.
- USDA NAP - disaster assistance for weather-related losses of container grown shellfish (or under netting).
- Multi-year effort to expand coverage to bottom-planted crops – should be in place by October!

Achievements

- Vibrio Education – brochures, articles, videos and presentations....
- Letters & comments – ACOE permitting, sewage blending, organic shellfish, endangered species listing, NOAA policies, & many more....
- Formation of ECSRI
- Earmarks for critical shellfish research
- Best Management Practices project(s)

Communications

- Web site www.ECSGA.org
- ECSGA LISTSERV
- Newsletter - electronic and paper
- Public outreach and education (fliers, brochures, Vibrio education)
- Point of contact for press questions
- Facebook - become a "fan"
- Twitter - @ShellfishFarmer

BMP project

- Top industry priority
- Funded by NRAC and NOAA
- Help growers develop individualized operational manuals
- Developing into a marketing tool complete with customized brochure

ECSRI Research Projects

- Rapid detection and differentiation of pathogenic strains *Vibrio parhemolyticus*. (URI & UNH, and for 2010 ARS Del. State)
- Evaluation of heavy metals in East Coast shellfish (Roger Williams and URI)
- Evaluation of impacts of shellfish culture and mechanical harvest on benthic communities (Milford & Rutgers).

Survey of metals in farmed shellfish

(Dale Leavitt & Stephen O'Shea)

Survey cadmium (Cd), mercury (Hg) and other trace metal levels in

- *Crassostrea virginica*
- *Mercenaria mercenaria*

East Coast Shellfish Research Institute - NOAA Milford Laboratory (Ron Goldberg)

Effects of mechanical harvest of oysters
and hydraulic clam dredging on leased
grounds.



East Coast Shellfish Research Institute Virginia Institute of Marine Science Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory

Industry Partners-

Cherrystone Aquafarms (VA)
Mathis Clam Farm (NJ)

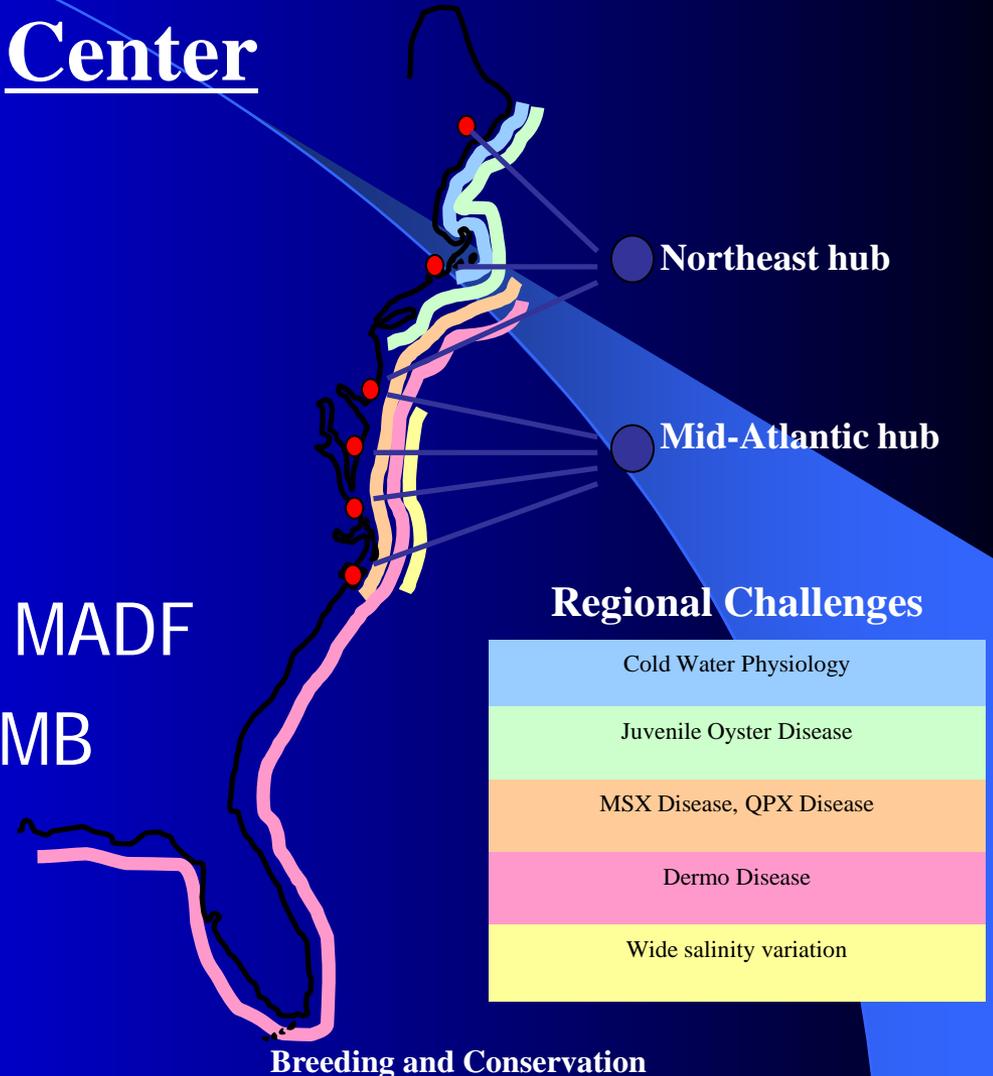
Assessing the
impacts of clam
aquaculture on
the intertidal
seafloor habitat
and benthos



ARS Shellfish Breeding Center

Collaborators:

- Univ. Maine
- URI
- Rutgers - Haskin Lab - MADF
- UMD - Horn Point - COMB
- VIMS
- UNC Wilmington



Shellfish Breeding Center

- **USDA- ARS center**
- **Leverage existing talent and facilities**
- **Add geneticists and breeding specialists**
- **Additional resources for sequencing, grow out trials and disease monitoring**
- **Accelerate selective breeding for disease resistance and production traits**

Get Involved !

You need the ECSGA - - and we need you

- Communications / Policy / Information
- Marketing / Festival Planning / Tastings
- Regulations / Political Action
- Membership / Recruiting
- Research - ECSRI

How will you get involved to protect your business?

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