



# NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



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<http://aquaculture.noaa.gov>

## NOAA Aquaculture Program

Guided by NOAA's *10-Year Plan for Marine Aquaculture*, the Aquaculture Program is focused on creating domestic supply to meet the nation's growing demand for seafood; establishing aquaculture as a viable technology for replenishment of important commercial and recreational marine fisheries; and creating opportunities for the United States to engage the global aquaculture community through scientific exchange. A robust domestic aquaculture industry is critical to support jobs, maintain working waterfronts, and provide a domestic alternative to increased dependence on imported seafood.

### Primary Activities

NOAA's Aquaculture Program addresses sustainable coastal, onshore, and offshore marine shellfish and finfish farming, as well as stock enhancement (hatchery) activities that support commercial and recreational fishing and the restoration of some endangered species. The program goals include:

- Establish a comprehensive regulatory program for the conduct of marine aquaculture operations.
- Develop technologies to support commercial marine aquaculture and the enhancement of wild finfish and shellfish stocks.
- Conduct education and outreach activities to heighten the public's awareness of marine aquaculture.
- Meet international obligations to promote environmentally sustainable practices for marine aquaculture.

### Research Priorities

The Aquaculture Program is focused on re-establishing and expanding core capabilities at NOAA Science Centers to address regulatory and public policy questions related to aquaculture, conduct research on species and rearing technologies, and maintain hatchery and broodstock holding facilities. NOAA also funds external research through grants, including pilot projects that foster sustainable aquaculture production and support the development of new technologies in the United States by the seafood industry, government, and academic partners. Recent accomplishments include:

- Funded pioneering marine aquaculture research through external grant programs.
- Launched the NOAA-USDA Alternative Feeds Initiative.
- Hosted a National Marine Aquaculture Summit.
- Hosted a National Symposium on Shellfish and the Environment.
- Published a major economics study focused on marine aquaculture.
- Worked with partners to complete a draft *National Aquatic Animal Health Plan*.



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## Aquaculture Statistics

As a federal agency under the U.S. Department of Commerce, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is at the forefront of a national initiative to help the United States become more self-sufficient in the production of seafood. This national initiative is based on strong, sustainable commercial marine fisheries complemented by robust domestic aquaculture production. Listed below are some facts and figures regarding U.S. and world aquaculture.

### Facts & Figures

- Aquaculture is the fastest growing form of food production in the world. Many worldwide fisheries have peaked and aquaculture is widely recognized as the best means to increase global seafood supplies.
- Fish farms produce nearly half the fish consumed by humans globally and the trend continues to increase.
- Global wild fish harvest is 95 million tons.
- Present global aquaculture production is nearly 60 million tons, valued at \$70 billion.
- Annual U.S. seafood consumption (wild and farmed) is 6-7 million tons.
- In this large and growing global market, the U.S. remains a net importer of seafood – about 84 percent of the seafood consumed in the United States is imported from other countries and about half of that is farmed. As a result, the U.S. has an annual seafood trade deficit of \$9 billion.
- Total U.S. aquaculture production is about \$1 billion annually, compared to world aquaculture production of about \$70 billion.
- Only about 20 percent of U.S. aquaculture production is marine species (mostly shellfish).
- U.S. marine aquaculture is 2% of the U.S. seafood supply.
- U.S. marine aquaculture has a \$200 million farm-gate or ‘landed’ value.
- The majority of U.S. marine aquaculture is shellfish – oysters, clams, mussels.
- Based on demand and population growth projections in the U.S., the projected domestic seafood gap will be 2-4 million tons in 2025.
- The U.S. needs both wild and farmed seafood products to meet seafood demand.

