

SUSTAINABLE AQUACULTURE AND FISHERIES

Aquaculture, or farmed seafood, provides food security and jobs, reduces pressure on Maryland's natural resources, and supports local economies. Maryland Sea Grant (MDSG) supports the development of aquaculture as a growing commercial opportunity in Maryland.



OUR WORK

Projects

Maryland Sea Grant supports research, education, and extension aquaculture projects. In collaboration with fish farmers, NGOs, and regulatory partners, we achieve far-reaching impacts. Here are some of the projects supported in 2023:

MDSG's seafood safety Extension specialist continued to lead a testing and reporting program for **12 Maryland seafood processors** to ensure Maryland crabmeat is free of bacteria.



MDSG Extension supported an online aquaculture business planning tool, available to Maryland's **478 oyster growers** and growers around the world, to simulate business scenarios, maximize profit, and apply for financial assistance programs.



MDSG-funded researchers improved understanding of the dynamics between striped bass and their prey, Atlantic menhaden, which is being used by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to develop the **menhaden stock assessment**.



Photo: Chesapeake Bay Program

MDSG-funded researchers are working to revive Maryland's **soft-shell clam aquaculture industry**. The project has provided valuable student career opportunities, supported millions of dollars in facility and technology upgrades, and resulted in several new patents and breeding lines.



OUR WORK

Projects

MDSG, alongside partners, hosted three of six regional workshops showcasing and receiving input on several tools for aquaculture siting to advance sustainable development around the US.

More than 160 people participated in these workshops.



MDSG published a report about a 2023 recirculating salmon aquaculture research meeting, which convened 115 salmon aquaculture professionals, researchers, and Extension specialists. The group shared project updates for the **\$10 million in USDA funding** spurring growth for this US industry.



Researchers funded to develop Maryland's first native oyster lines successfully established **multiple oyster broodstock lines for aquaculture**, resulting in hardier oysters for Maryland waters and leading to additional state funding to upgrade and permanently staff a Morgan State University oyster hatchery and breeding program.



The Economic Benefits of Oyster Aquaculture

94,286 bushels

Maryland's record-setting 2023 oyster aquaculture harvest, the largest since the modern leasing program took effect

\$7.38 million

Estimated dockside value of the oyster aquaculture industry in Maryland in 2023

\$13.3 million

Total economic impact of oyster aquaculture industry on Maryland in 2023

7,579 acres

Leased and tended by Maryland's oyster farmers in 2023

From *Maryland Shellfish Aquaculture at a Glance 2023*

Maryland Sea Grant is a federal-state partnership program that is part of the University System of Maryland. We are administered by the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and located in College Park, Maryland. Sea Grant Extension faculty are administered by the University of Maryland, College Park, and located in offices around the state. The National Sea Grant College Program is a network of 34 university-based programs in coastal and Great Lakes states, Puerto Rico, and Guam.

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