

New York Aquaculture Industry Needs Assessment Summary

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To better understand the New York aquaculture industry, its constraints, and opportunities for growth, New York Sea Grant conducted a needs assessment in 2021 followed by an overall report in 2022¹. This was done to establish what specific support is required for the state's aquaculture industry's success. There is a large range of diversity throughout the state with multiple finfish operations (e.g., trout, bass, salmon, etc.), and many shellfish operations throughout Long Island that are also interested in expanding their production to include macroalgae (e.g., sugar kelp). Despite the diversity of the industry, similar needs were identified across all sectors of aquaculture.

While New York has a long history of shellfish and finfish aquaculture, current production lags far behind other states in the region. According to the 2018 USDA Aquaculture Census, New York had roughly \$8.8 million in revenue from aquaculture. This places New York among the lowest of coastal states, some of which are producing double and triple that amount. Despite the low production in comparison to surrounding states, the potential for aquaculture growth in New York is high, with expanding market demands for high quality, locally grown products.

¹Full reports can be found at www.nyseagrant.org/aquaculture

New York is in a position where proactive and collaborative efforts are required to move the aquaculture industry forward. Since 1984, multiple reports and surveys of stakeholders, agencies, and industry members across the state have outlined what is needed for aquaculture to be successful, yet minimal changes have occurred. It is clear that New York has the potential to be a leader in aquaculture production, technology, and research, given its freshwater and marine resources, but the state needs commitment to a strong and clear plan to advance it. The inclusion of aquaculture as an agricultural product and the development of an aquaculture specific department at the state level could be the first step. These are necessary changes for New York, especially if the state is going to contribute and be a significant part of the ongoing nation-wide growth of aquaculture. Streamlining regulations would give the aquaculture industry the stable foundation it needs to develop further. New York has the capacity to support a thriving aquaculture industry throughout the state, but it will require effort from both sides, working towards common goals, so that New York can move forward to grow and sustain aquaculture in the state. Below are key issues that need to be addressed to facilitate improvement.

Key Issues to Address

- ❖ Create state level position(s) focused on the aquaculture industry.
- ❖ Streamline regulations and permitting.
- ❖ Increase business funding and development opportunities specific to the industry.
- ❖ Improve the marketing of aquaculture products.
- ❖ Workforce development to support industry growth.
- ❖ Enhance consumer education and community support regarding aquaculture products.
- ❖ Develop seafood and aquaculture related infrastructure such as: processing facilities, cold storage, waterfront access, and expand distribution channels throughout New York.
- ❖ Increase capacity for in-state diagnostics of aquatic animal health.