



Safe and Sustainable Seafood Supply Focus Team Report 2011



Goal 1: A sustainable supply of safe seafood to meet public demand.

Ensuring a sustainable supply of safe seafood requires an understanding of the effects of overfishing, past management decisions, and climate change on U.S. wild fish populations as well as the role ecosystem-based fisheries management can play. It also requires better understanding of the range of complex issues related to developing the domestic aquaculture industry. Sea Grant will make major contributions by supporting research that provides the knowledge needed to understand the factors stressing fisheries and the complexities of aquaculture development. Sea Grant will also translate and transfer useful research findings through extension and education activities to ensure responsible and productive use of these resources in the future.

6399 -- CONNECTICUT SEA GRANT

Connecticut Sea Grant research on kelp culture techniques resulted in tangible economic benefit to the sustainable food industry in New England.

6292 -- MICHIGAN SEA GRANT

Michigan Sea Grant helped Michigan's flagging whitefish industry by supporting development of a cooperative that shifted focus from a single commodity to value-added products and increased their earnings.

6679 -- GEORGIA SEA GRANT

Georgia Sea Grant research launches "half-shell" oyster industry in Georgia.

14110 -- SOUTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT

South Carolina Sea Grant Extension, working with the SCDHEC, SCDNR and interested farmers and fishermen have utilized a multifaceted program to develop and sustain a South Carolina shellfish industry based on small farmers, diversified fishermen/farmers and diversified traditional seafood docks.

14203 -- TEXAS SEA GRANT

Texas Sea Grant-sponsored experimental trawl gear resulted in 20-39 percent fuel savings for Texas shrimp fishermen.

6962 -- OREGON SEA GRANT

Continued Oregon Sea Grant research support on Klamath River Chinook salmon disease played a vital role in an expert panel recommendation concerning hydroelectric dam removal, which informs pending legislation for \$1.4 billion remediation.





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Goal 2: A healthy domestic seafood industry that harvests, produces, processes, and markets seafood responsibly and efficiently.

A healthy seafood industry requires harvesting techniques that minimize by-catch and damage to marine habitats. It requires development of value-added products, enhanced quality assurance, and education about how to market under-utilized species. Sea Grant will involve harvesters, recreational fishermen, producers and managers in being responsible stewards as well as successful entrepreneurs. Sea Grant will support development of new technologies and participate in collaborative efforts to increase the range of seafood products produced, enhancing American competitiveness in global markets.

#6290 – MICHIGAN SEA GRANT

Thanks to help from Michigan Sea Grant, whitefish commercial fish processors now realize an income, rather than an expense, in responsibly repurposed fish wastes for kosher and other products.

#6959 – OREGON SEA GRANT

Oregon Sea Grant-funded research on causes of death and damage among shipped marine ornamental fish resulted in suppliers and retailers adopting new best management practices that save \$4.86 million annually and reduce environmental impacts.

#6960 – OREGON SEA GRANT

With Oregon Sea Grant's assistance, new seafood products provide continuing and often new sources of revenue and jobs for local coastal communities and tribal members. Innovations in packaging and product development add an annual estimated \$4.67 million to the economy and improve the use of coastal seafood.

#14044 – OREGON SEA GRANT

Oregon Sea Grant and ODFW's recompression guide and workshops inspire the creation of an award-winning recompression tool that promotes safe catch-and-release practices among fishermen in Oregon and beyond and significantly decreases fish mortality.

#14203 – TEXAS SEA GRANT

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Goal 3: Informed consumers who understand the importance of ecosystem health and sustainable harvesting practices to the future of our domestic fisheries, who appreciate the health benefits of seafood consumption, and who understand how to evaluate the safety of the seafood products they buy.

Increased attention to the safety of domestic and international seafood has created an urgent need for rapid assessment techniques, certification programs, and standards for domestic and international seafood products, so consumers will have reliable information to inform their buying decisions. Sea Grant will involve industry representatives in the application of seafood safety standards, train inspectors and wholesalers in how to assess seafood quality, and develop educational materials related to seafood safety, quality, and security and make these materials readily available to consumers.

6941 – OREGON SEA GRANT

Oregon Sea Grant funding has helped educate thousands of surimi professionals and facilitated the development of two U.S. patents for heating devices that ensure safer seafood processing and contribute millions of dollars to the seafood industry.

#6477 – CONNECTICUT SEA GRANT

Sea Grant and Land Grant extension professionals share science-based information on the safety of aquaculture products with federal advisory committee, leading to their inclusion in the 2010 U.S. Dietary Guidelines.

#14078 – NORTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT

Many N.C. commercial fishermen and seafood businesses are struggling to remain profitable. Sea Grant has programs to assist them with seafood branding, direct marketing and consumer education. Currently four marketing efforts are operational with significant assistance from NCSG: Carteret Catch, Ocracoke Fresh, Brunswick Catch and Outer Banks Catch. NCSG research also coined the term Community Supported Fisheries, which now has spread/adapted to more than 60 programs around the nation.

#14079 – FLORIDA SEA GRANT

Third annual "Shellfish School" teaches BMP's for product safety and marketing to 20 shellfish buyers and 16 seafood businesses representatives. Participants estimated that they increased their business income by \$10,000 due to the school.

#14081 – FLORIDA SEA GRANT

Thirty seafood operations, 40 seafood retail operations, and more than 200 regulatory agency inspectors received new HACCP certifications, thereby helping to sustain the seafood industry and the quality of seafood products.



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Gaps

- Climate change and fisheries/seafood are not well represented
- Geographic gaps (e.g. Mid-Atlantic) in SSSS reporting
- Lacking in efforts focused on seafood sustainability
 - Need better vocabulary, definitions of terms
 - Confusion among general public on definitions/rankings of sustainable seafood
- Individual impact statements from each program don't paint a broad picture of overall strengths across the SG network
- Communication issues within the network, and between the network and the focus team

Opportunities

- Regional needs assessments
 - Will have political legs
- Solicit feedback from constituents on major issues—determine how that matches up with what we are doing
- Implement process to ID gaps
 - Use regional planning efforts to see what is missing across the network
 - Incentives for the SG community to work together nationally and regionally
 - Opportunities for professional development training for educators/communicators, so they can pass it on, i.e. “train the trainers.”
- Sea Grant branding
 - Take action to distinguish ‘us’ from the ‘others’
- Reinforce Fish Watch as source for sustainability information based on solid science
 - Add to topics for discussion at SG week
- Enhance communications between the focus team and relevant networks
 - Set up NING, Basecamp, or other site to make SSSS information accessible to network and beyond
- Enhance communication among programs—sharing of Best Management Practices
- Analyzing impacts across topics rather than individual projects would make a stronger case for SG success (i.e. compile all HACCP activities across all relevant states and report total number of people trained nationwide)
- Further training on proper impact writing/reporting at SGA meetings
 - Clarify criteria for impacts vs. accomplishments
 - Clarify the statute of limitations for impacts that repeat annually

Cross-cutting issues

- Climate change
- Community Supported Fisheries
- Working Waterfronts
- Marine Spatial Planning
- Marine Protected Areas
- Sectors
- Urban Estuaries
- Aquaculture permitting
- Genetically modified species



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