

Aquaculture Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, July 8, 2014

**Oregon Department of Agriculture
635 Capitol St. NE**



Participants: Kathy Bridges, Ore Aquaculture Assoc., Gil Silvia and Michael Morrissey, OSU; Joel Keebler and Jdeen Schilling, Chemeketa Community College; Jon Steinman, Pacific Seafoods; Dave Landkamer, Aquaculture Specialist; John Moehl, Aquaculture Specialist; Dan & Dee Driscoll, Prairie Springs Fish Farm; Joe Rohleder, Desert Springs Trout Farm; Margaret Barrette, Pacific Coast Shellfish Association; Lauren Henderson and Jerry Gardner, ODA.

Via telephone: Rep. Caddy McKeown (Dist. 9), Mary Camarata, DEQ, Scott Patterson, ODF&W, Chris Spalding and Dave Price, Ore Coast Community College; Cal Mukumoto,

Coquille Economic Development Corp.; Martin Zone, USDA Rural Development; Mark Wiegardt, Whiskey Creek Shellfish Hatchery.

1. Dr. Michael Morrissey, Superintendent of OSU's Food Innovation Center in Portland and the former Director of OSU's Seafood Research Lab in Astoria gave a power point presentation titled, "[The Future of Fish Protein: Beyond Sustainability or How Fisheries & Aquaculture Will Save the World](#)".
2. There was general agreement that aquaculture is generally becoming more acceptable around the world as a sustainable, healthy source of protein. Aquaculture has failed to get the respect it deserves. However, this may be changing.
3. Jerry Gardner indicated that the ODA plans to play a more significant role in assisting both marine and in-land shell and finfish producers increase production in Oregon. Aquaculture represents a substantial opportunity for Oregon's rural communities. This is particularly true given the challenges associated with the need to feed an increasing population, increasing pressure on natural resources, increasing energy needs, and the impact of climate change on our ability to produce food.
4. The group briefly discussed the ODA's Rural Business Enterprise Grant (RBEG) recently awarded by USDA Rural Development. This \$36,000 project will provide stakeholders with a fundamental understanding of the status of aquaculture in Oregon and give potential new investors a road map for getting started. Several case studies will identify issues that limit timely investment in aquaculture. An outline of the major topics that will be covered is [attached](#). This works only represents a start but is necessary to inform interested parties about aquaculture in Oregon and gain support for the opportunity that aquaculture represents.
5. Margaret Barrette summarized the results of the Oregon Shellfish Initiative held in Newport of July 7th. Shellfish producers along the west coast are responding to the federal government's National Shellfish Initiative by focusing on what needs to be done to increase shellfish production in California, Oregon and Washington. The National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is offering assistance for both shell and finfish producers. The federal government is responding to the fact that the USA is running a \$10 billion seafood trade deficit. The US imports 91% of the seafood consumed in the US.
6. Margaret indicated that Washington is supporting the effort to streamline processes designed to expand the shellfish industry. However, it still takes several years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to start a new shellfish operation in Washington. Biological studies and legal fees are cost prohibitive. Margaret indicated that her organization is willing to work with Oregon's shellfish and in-land producers to come up with a State of Oregon Aquaculture Plan.
7. There was general agreement that ODF&W plays a critical role in Oregon aquaculture future. The ODF&W is correctly concerned about disease and escapement issues. They have a mandate to protect Oregon's fish populations and they cannot vary from the statutes they must observe. However, further discussion need to take place to determine where permitting requirements can be streamlined.

8. Lauren Henderson indicated that the ODA plans to consult with Governor Kitzhaber's Natural Resource Policy Advisor – Gabriela Goldfarb to inform her of this group's aquaculture initiative. If possible, several members of this group may be asked to make a short presentation to the Governor's staff and state agency representatives about the importance of aquaculture and what the industry plans to do. It is important to gain legislative and executive level support for a larger aquaculture industry in Oregon.
9. Aquaculture operations are critically important to many communities in Oregon. For example, Oregonians travel to the coast to consume fresh seafood products like oysters. This defines livability in Oregon.
10. The group briefly discussed holding a town hall meeting, possibly at a community college, to enhance the public's understanding of contemporary aquaculture. Many felt this is a worthwhile idea but must be well planned. No decision was reached.
11. The group discussed forming a "leadership committee" that will meet more regularly to help guide the process.
12. Next steps: a) the ODA will release an RFP to get the aquaculture study underway; b) a small group will connect to make sure efforts to enhance both marine and in-land aquaculture in Oregon are coordinated; c) a small group may discuss this initiative with the Governor's staff; and, d) the next meeting will be scheduled in mid-October.