



Great Lakes Aquaculture Decision-Maker Day

An opportunity for aquaculture farmers to meet with local legislators and decision-makers to highlight the potential value of the aquaculture industry for New York State and its residents

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

New York State has 3,400 miles of diverse coastline and is the only state in the U.S. bordering both the Great Lakes and Atlantic Ocean. More than 85% of NY's population lives in a coastal region.



New York Sea Grant regional offices provide innovative research, technical assistance, and outreach on such issues as water quality, coastal resilience, marine & freshwater fisheries, invasive species, algal blooms, aquaculture & seafood, coastal literacy, and shoreline community development.

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NYSG Focus Area
for this project summary:
**Sustainable NY Fisheries,
Aquaculture &
Seafood Businesses**

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January 2024

The aquaculture industry in the Great Lakes states has expressed a need to increase awareness about its value and improve support from respective local government agencies.

The Great Lakes Sea Grant programs developed an “Aquaculture Decision-Maker Day” event to provide local decision-makers with the opportunity to tour a fish farm and meet with aquaculture farmers. Similar events are held in each of the Great Lakes states and allow farmers to speak about the challenges and opportunities for improving domestic seafood production and reducing the need to import.

In October 2023, NYSG coordinated a tour and aquaculture industry discussion event at LocalCoho, a salmon farm, in Auburn, NY. Eight additional farms provided content about the value of their operations and the challenges they face; four of those farm owners attended the event. Legislators with aquaculture farms in their districts or that participate on committees relevant to the aquaculture industry were invited along with officials from the City of Auburn and Cayuga County. The information compiled for the event to increase awareness of NY's aquaculture industry and its potential was shared with legislators that could not attend.

The aquaculture industry members discussed collaborative efforts to address some shared issues and had the opportunity to meet NYSG's new aquaculture specialist and additional Sea Grant staff who provide seafood safety and technology-related resources. The farmers have requested more such events. This NYSG-coordinated event increased connections among aquaculture industry members and local decision-makers and provided the opportunity for farmers to convey the challenges and opportunities for land-based seafood production in the Great Lakes region and across New York state.

Project Partners:

- Great Lakes Aquaculture Collaborative: IL/IN, MI, MN, OH, WI Sea Grant programs
- LocalCoho, Hudson Valley Fish Farm, Skytop Springs Farm, Nuponix, Hicklings Fish Farm, Beaverkill Fish Farm, Fish Haven Farm, Smith Creek Fish Farm and Blue Cove Cannery
- Funding: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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Top: LocalCoho's current recirculating aquaculture system recycles 80-85% of its water with plans to increase the recycle rate to 95% and to use the discharge as a nutrient-rich fertilizer for local crop farmers Photo: LocalCoho. Above: Aquaculture industry members and local decision-makers at NYSG-coordinated event at LocalCoho, Auburn, NY. Photo: NYSG/M.Ciaramella