

# Aqua-newsletter NI

The Newsletter of the Aquaculture Initiative EEIG

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## Producers Reiterate Call For Class A water.

Recently the Shellfish Producers have reiterated their call for the target under the Water Framework Directive—for shellfish farms to be Class A. In a recent consultation response by the ARG to the DOE on draft Pollution Reduction Programmes a call was made for water quality to be made a top priority. Similarly, in a meeting with between the Aquaculture Representative Group and DARD in April, a similar emphasis on the extent to which Aquaculture in NI is dependent on water quality and water quality standards need to be improved.

### Joint North-South Mussel Seed Consultation takes place.

A joint North / South consultation on a revised resource allocation process for mussel seed took place earlier this year ending at the end of May.

This consultation was issued by the Secretariat to the Bottom Grown Mussel Consultative Forum on behalf of DAFM and DARD with a foreword by the Minister of DAFM in the South of Ireland Simon Coveney TD and the Minister of DARD in the North, Michelle O' Neill MLA.

It is a significant document as it outlines proposals for how to manage the mussel seed stocks—an issue that is crucial to the sustainable development of the sector for the future.

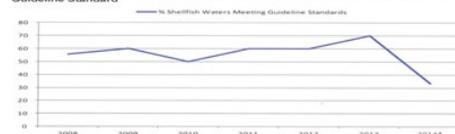


Aquaculture Initiative EEIG

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### Shellfish Waters

Figure 4.4 Shellfish Waters Directive Compliance with Guideline E. Coli Standard in Flesh, 2008-2013 Shellfish Waters Directive Standard and 2014 WFD Guideline Standard



\* In January 2014, the Shellfish Waters Directive was subsumed into the Water Framework Directive. The WFD Guideline standard is slightly higher than the existing standard in the Shellfish Waters Directive.

### Greencastle Ferry Gets Planning Approval

The proposed Greencastle to Greenore Ferry terminal has been approved for planning permission

This development has caused some concern to aquaculture interests in the area because of the close proximity to an oyster farm on the Northern shore.

Part of the conditions of the Planning Permission is that an independent Marine Mammal Observer has to be appointed by the developers—to ensure that best practise is carried out to avoid affecting the local Marine wildlife and minimise disturbance to protected species.

There is no information received as yet on whether there will be a similar level of protection arranged for Aquaculture in the area.

## Oyster farmer looks to ‘KICKSTARTER’ to raise capital !

Crowdfunding is the process where by a business raises capital from a large number of small investors—typically through the internet—rather than the traditional way of accessing capital—by going to one financial source (e.g. a bank) to obtain all your funds. The concept of ‘Crowd funding’ is being looked at to help bring a start-up oyster farmer up to the next level of business development.

Kickstarter is the biggest crowdfunding site in the world. Having spoken to the Aquaculture Initiative on new options to finance and develop his newly acquired oyster farm—Fabrice Richez decided to look into Kickstarter. It is the first time this has been tried on the Island of Ireland for an Aquaculture project, and hopes are high for success. If this pitch is successful, perhaps crowd funding maybe the way forward for many Aquaculture ventures to seek capital investment in the future.

# KICKSTARTER

Fabrice is keen to try this approach—” I know I have the experience and market contacts to make a success of my site in Larne—the issue for me is how to finance the working capital to invest in the site—oyster ventures in the U.S. have been funded through Kickstarter—so I’m going to be a pioneer here and hopefully the “Facebook generation“will want to invest in my Aquaculture business”.

## Final IBIS Workshop meeting held in Newry May 13-14th.

The IBIS project, held its last workshop on the programme of research work and presented its results. Overall a wide number of Aquatic resource projects gave presentations including those addressing Aquaculture issues.



Simon Guist gave an interesting talk on his project looking at various husbandry practices to reduce oyster mortalities from Herpes—in which he had worked closely along side the Aquaculture Initiative. Also, Gala Podgornik from the genetics lab in QUB gave an insightful talk on using DNA profiling for the improvement of Perch breeding techniques that she had carried out working alongside BIM and the Perch farm in Tipperary.

## Meeting held between Aquaculture Representative Group (ARG) and DARD.

A meeting between the Aquaculture Representative Group representing producers and Fisheries officials in DARD representing regulators was held in April. This meeting held to discuss the current problems, challenges and opportunities impacting on Aquaculture producers .

These topics included ;

- Current Market situation / opportunities.
- Water Quality issues affecting the sector.
- EFF / EMFF / UK Multi Annual Plan / Fisheries Bill.

This type of meeting is recognised as being beneficial to discuss arising issues promptly. DARD suggested that this format of meeting should take place twice a year to maintain good contact. A further meeting was pencilled in for late October / November.

## Scotland's Aquaculture Sector; - Shellfish on the rise.

It is well established that Scotland's production of Salmon is at a Global level. According to the Scottish Fish Farm Production Survey 2013 report, 163,234 tonnes of farmed Atlantic salmon was produced in 2013, the highest recorded production since 2003.

The farm gate value of farmed salmon was £677 million last year, an increase of 26 per cent compared to the previous year.

Now, production figures from Scotland show that shellfish production is on the rise too. In 2014, the first-sales value of the shellfish industry increased 18%, reaching GBP 10.5 million (EUR 13.5 million).

In all, 7,683 tonnes of mussels were produced, the highest production on record.

In addition the production of oysters also increased by 9% during 2013.

## SEAFISH Launch New Fund of £750,000 to support seafood industry

Seafish have just launched a new funding stream, called the Strategic Investment Fund. Applicants are invited to submit an initial short proposal before the 31st July deadline then all submissions will be reviewed and the preferred proposers invited to submit a more detailed bid.

Proposals will be assessed on their value for money and return on investment as well as the relevance to current Seafish work, technical merit and success metrics.

## Efsa publish second Scientific Opinion on Oshv oyster Herpes.



The European Food Standards Authority have issued a long awaited second and updated scientific opinion on oyster mortalities and primarily the threat from the herpes virus.

This report is a review of the current scientific information and from this a panel of scientists have drawn up conclusions,

Studies carried out since 2010 provide strong evidence that OsHV-1  $\mu$  var is linked to increase oyster spat mortality at temperatures above 16°C. However, due to lack of information a causal link between *Vibrio aestuarianus* has not been established.



This report also highlights how discharge of untreated seawater from depuration units is a potential mode of transmission, a point of note is that UV radiation at 254 nm is effective at inactivating Oshv-1 and *V.aestuarianus* . Also significantly, infected oysters that are not showing the disease, but which are able to transmit the infection are not always detected by PCR. This limits the value of PCR as a method to control movement of infected oysters.

This was something that UCC worked on and the Aquaculture Initiative / oyster farmers in NI have contributed to their programme of work when needed.

## Oyster producer safety highlighted at meeting between Agencies.

Following tragic events earlier this year when an oyster farmer lost his life on site in Co. Clare after he got into difficulty, the Aquaculture Initiative in June organised a meeting between The Coastguard and the Health & Safety Executive in at the MCA offices in Bangor about improving safety for oyster farmers. From this meeting the central points for Oyster farmers to use to improve safety were;

**Use Life Jackets. Wear High Visibility Clothes. Use VHF radio communication, so you can contact to shore / Coastguard in an emergency.**

As we know depending on the oyster site, mobile phones can be unreliable in marine environments. Hand held VHF radios would be very useful. These are very effective – and you can receive automatically updated weather warnings as they are broadcast. Also VHF communicators can also help co-ordinate farm activities while working together on site as well.



Another critical point from the meeting was that if contacting the Coastguard in an emergency– you need to give a Latitude / Longitude from the site - for them to go straight to your position.

**Further information on any article or copies of presentations from the conferences is available. Contact Martin Flanigan at the Downpatrick Office. Tel . 028 44619660**