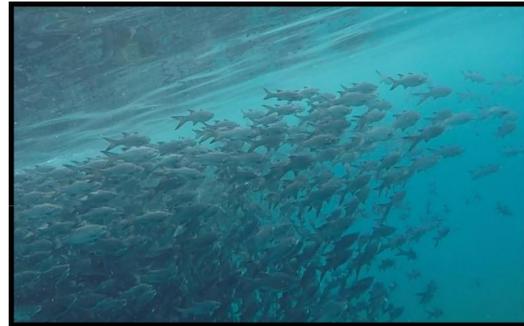


Letter from the Director

Aloha,

As we close out one season and welcome another, we are looking forward to celebrating 'Seafood Month' in October. Even though Covid-19 is still significantly impacting supply chains, I am happy to see that many places across the globe are reporting increased consumption of seafood. The Environmental Defense Fund poll report from July concluded that "over 7 in 10 American voters would eat more seafood if there were higher safety standards on how farmed fish are produced." This is not surprising in light of studies showing that many seafoods are high in nutrients that increase immunity, resulting in a better physical response to infections such as Covid-19. I am also pleased to see more articles promoting the consumption of sustainable seafood, including the Seafoodsource top 25 innovative seafood products, which includes our local favorite "Poke Bowl." Traceability, sustainability and conservation are among the most common concerns that consumers have when it comes to seafood, so it is important to capitalize on any opportunities to educate the public. With that in mind, both this issue and the October 'Seafood Month' issue of Regional e-Notes highlight sustainable seafood.



A critical part of our mission at CTSA is to support the production of sustainable seafood. In order for us to succeed in this mission in our abundant yet isolated region, we must work together with aquaculture stakeholders and other funding agencies to leverage funding and other resources. In recent years, CTSA has enjoyed increased collaboration with our local NOAA offices, especially since their creation of a regional Aquaculture Coordinator position. For the past ten years, three NOAA Aquaculture Coordinators have served on the CTSA Technical Committee, providing critical input on new project development and monitoring of ongoing projects. Nearly two years ago, Tori Spence McConnell assumed the Coordinator role, and our 'Seafood Month' issue will feature an interview with her about sustainable seafood priorities and collaboration with CTSA. Be sure to keep an eye out!

This month's issue includes an article about the role of sustainable seafood at the first UN Food Systems Summit, as well as an announcement and link for a new CTSA survey for farmers, producers, and stakeholders in the U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands. Our program has some additional funds available for project development this year, and members of our committees expressed interest in creating a digital toolkit to meet the unique and specific needs of our local aquaculture producers. We are considering creating a hands-on training series via Zoom to share the knowledge of experts from within and beyond the region. Before we can proceed, we need YOUR input on the most important topics to cover in 'how-to' seminars. Please take a moment to read about and take the survey.

Many thanks for your continued support of our program!

Mahalo,
Dr. Cheng-Sheng Lee
Executive Director, CTSA

We Need Your Input! What Should We Feature in Our 'Digital Toolkit' for Local Producers?

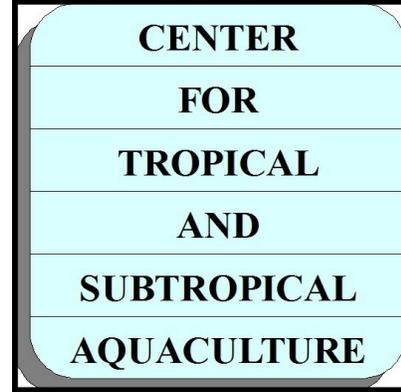
CTSA is requesting your participation in a survey to assess stakeholder priorities for a forthcoming digital training series.

The CTSA FY21 Request for Pre-Proposals, released this past April, lists the five program priority areas for funding during this year's

development cycle. Under the framework of the priority areas --and following the suggestion of CTSA committee members-- our program is planning to use remaining FY21 development funds to create a digital toolkit to address the needs of local aquaculture producers.

The toolkit will consist of a series of hands-on training seminars, featured live on Zoom with Q&A sessions and also recorded for future reproduction. The seminars will be based on our local conditions and prepared specifically for producers in our region. Accordingly, we are conducting a survey to help determine the most important topics that local producers and other stakeholders would like to see included in the seminars.

Please take a few moments and [click here to take the survey](#). If you have a preference for training outside of the priority areas listed in the survey, please explain under 'Other.' We also welcome discussion with any member of the CTSA administrative team. Your assistance and input is greatly appreciated in this process!



Sustainable Aquatic Foods in the Spotlight at the First U.N Food Systems Summit

Aquatic Foods were a main topic of discussion at the first-ever United Nations Food Systems Summit (UNFSS), a virtual event held last week to convene world experts and community leaders to work towards achieving the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to [Blue Food Assessment](#), the UNFSS "presented an opportunity to bring blue food to the policy table, elevating the role of food from freshwater and marine environments in building healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems.



At the July UNFSS Pre-Summit in Rome, Italy, members of the BFA team promoted a growing 'Alliance for Blue Foods,' meant to mobilize action across the blue food sector to build more resilient food systems. The UNFSS featured that proposed coalition. Twenty-two Member States and an array of civil society organizations, academic institutions, blue food producers and consumer groups confirmed their interest in building the coalition together. Grounded in previous international agreements and collaborations, the coalition agrees that sustainable blue foods will not only increase the supply of nutritious food but also contribute to community resilience, decent jobs, gender equality, and poverty alleviation."

One of the major outputs of the Summit was the [Commitment to Action](#) on the Proposed Coalition for Blue/Aquatic Foods. The following are excerpts from the 'Commitment':

The Member States and organizations of the Coalition (listed below) are working to develop a Coalition focused on realizing the full potential of sustainable blue, or aquatic, foods – such as fish, shellfish, aquatic plants, and algae, captured or cultivated in freshwater or marine ecosystems – to help end malnutrition and build nature-positive, equitable and resilient food systems.

Robust and rapidly growing evidence in the FSS record demonstrates the vital potential of aquatic foods to meet nutrition deficiencies and to help meet the environmental and climate challenge. This evidence establishes the urgent need to integrate sustainably harvested blue foods into national and local food system policies and programs and also, especially in the most vulnerable countries, to invest in climate-resilient blue food production.

Coalition members – including the Member States, civil society organizations, academic institutions, aquatic food producers, and consumer groups – agree that sustainable blue foods will not only increase the supply of nutritious food but also contribute to community resilience, decent jobs, gender equality, and poverty alleviation.

The Coalition is grounded in the international consensus already achieved – in the FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, the 2021 COFI Declaration, the SSF Guidelines, the CFS, and UN Nutrition. It will take advantage of existing initiatives, like the Ocean Panel, Global Action Network, Blue Food Assessment, Safe Seaweed Coalition, and Rise Up for the Oceans. Coalition members are coming together in a unified commitment to support the actual, concrete implementation of key aquatic food priorities, especially at the country level.

The coalition has two key missions:

- to raise the profile of aquatic foods in the context of food systems overall, so that they will finally be placed where they belong on the agenda (and budget) of decision-makers not usually aware of their significance, such as health ministers, development ministers, finance ministers, and prime ministers, and

- to mobilize support and cooperation for specific projects and opportunities to drive implementation of sustainable blue food priority objectives of members, in order to complement and accelerate the work already underway via the FAO and other Rome-based agencies

The Coalition includes the following members: Iceland, Environmental Defense Council, Stanford University, World Resources Institute, CGIAR/Worldfish, Member States: Bangladesh; Belize; Canada; Chile; EU; Fiji; France; Ghana; Iceland; Japan; Kenya; Korea; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Palau; Peru; Portugal; Spain; United States of America Intergovernmental organizations: Pacific Community SPC-Communauté du Pacifique CPS; WorldFish/CGIAR Academic institutions: Stockholm Resilience Center; Stanford University Civil Society: EDF; WWF; WRI, Oceana, and Rare.

One of the coalition members, Palau, is in the CTSA region. The President of the Republic had the following to say at the Summit: "Amidst threat and degradation is opportunity; opportunity for us to join together to shift the power balance and define the terms on which we will protect and steward our resources for the benefit of our people; opportunity for us to coordinate with international partners to harness new businesses and new ideas to deliver us a triple bottom line: food security, good health and economic resilience." — H.E. Surangel S. Whipps, Jr., President, Republic of Palau

CTSA is hopeful that the development of this powerful coalition will result in an increased focus on sustainability within the global seafood supply chain, as well as increased regional production and consumption of sustainable seafood.

Aquaculture Announcements

-- [FDA Seeking Comments on MUMS](#)

The [Subcommittee on Aquaculture \(SCA\)](#) has posted and is seeking comments on a draft [National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Research 2021-25](#). This draft, when approved, will replace the [National Strategic Plan for Aquaculture Research \(214-2019\)](#).

The SCA is housed within the Office of Science and Technology Policy in the Executive Office of the President. Commenting is well-worth your time and effort. A recent Federal Register notice has extended the comment deadline to October 4th. Send your comments to:

Dr. Caird Rexroad III
National Program Leader for Aquaculture
Agricultural Research Service
Office of National Programs
5601 Sunnyside Avenue, Room 4-2106
Beltsville, MD 2075
Email: AquaSciencePlan@usda.gov

-- [Reminder: Sign Up For 2022 Census of Aquaculture](#)

The 2022 Census of Agriculture is right around the corner and USDA NASS is making every effort to count all aquaculture producers in the United States. If you produce any aquaculture products and want to make sure that you are counted in the 2022 Census of Agriculture and the 2023 Census of Aquaculture, please sign up your operation using this online form: <https://www.agcounts.usda.gov/cgi-bin/counts/>. Once you have signed up, you might receive a short survey in the next two years to further categorize your operation. Most likely, you will not receive a survey until the 2022 Census of Agriculture in January or February, 2023.

AquaClip: \$9.8 million research center to make waves in sustainable aquafeed production

A new Deakin University \$9.8m state-of-the-art aquaculture research center, the [AquaFI Hub](#), will be established to drive sustainable fish production, novel feed and aquaculture technology development, and industry training. With funding from the Victorian Government through its Higher Education State Investment Fund (VHESIF), the new state-of-the-art facility will be based at the Waurn Ponds campus.

Associate Professor David Francis, from Deakin's School of Life and Environmental Sciences, will lead research working towards improving the sustainability of the aquaculture industry by changing one simple factor, what we feed our farmed fish. Aquaculture has historically placed reliance on the use of less palatable, smaller species of fish, such as capelin, anchoveta and menhaden, which are rendered into fishmeal and fish oil to produced nutritionally complete feeds. However, fluctuations in the cost and

availability of these ingredients have raised concerns over the ability of the industry to grow in an economically viable and sustainable manner.

Francis said a circular bioeconomy is the future of the aquaculture feed industry. The AquaFI Hub will work directly with the industry to explore the use of sustainable ingredients in creating fish feed and how underutilized byproducts from other industries can have a second life. "Our key focus is to improve the way we feed our farmed fish and make it more nutritious and sustainable," Francis said.

The AquaFI Hub will not only be a research and development facility but also a place for cross-disciplinary curiosity and training, with an internship component and room for HDR students across many fields of study. "Aquaculture covers a range of disciplines, like biology, chemistry, engineering and economics," Francis said. "We want to bring in the entire aquaculture industry and solve these problems together."

Source: Aquafeed.com // [Full Article](#)

This newsletter is written and prepared by the CTSA Information Specialist Meredith Brooks.

The Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture (CTSA) is one of five regional aquaculture centers in the United States established and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) under active grants 2016-38500-25751, 2018-38500-28886, and 2020-38500-32559. The regional aquaculture centers integrate individual and institutional expertise and resources in support of commercial aquaculture development. CTSA was established in 1986 and is jointly administered by the University of Hawaii and the Oceanic Institute of Hawaii Pacific University.

Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture
www.ctsa.org

