



Regional e-Notes ~ April 2020 ~ Volume 12, Issue 4

Letter from the Director

Aloha,

As the CTSA team prepared this special Earth Day edition of Regional e-Notes from our homes, we reflected on our dependence and connection with our planet and its natural resources in light of an Earth Day unlike any other before. The tragic toll of the global pandemic cannot be understated, and we send our condolences and healing thoughts to all who are experiencing hardship. We are sharing some resources in this month's newsletter to help farmers who may be impacted by the current situation. We are also sharing an in-depth look at how the pandemic is impacting food security, conservation, aquaculture, and the future of sustainable food production.



As the population rapidly rises, protecting the environment while meeting dietary needs will be a critical issue to resolve, especially in the face of climate change. It is well accepted that, thus far, aquatic protein appears to be the most promising to increase production and reduce stress on the environment. However, we cannot continue the status quo. We must invest in research to develop more efficient ways to increase production and simultaneously protect the environment and/or mitigate environmental impacts of farming. The aquaculture community has been working together to reach this goal. The progression of seafood product labeling and certification will ensure that producers follow best practice guidelines to provide consumers with reliable and healthy protein. FAO and World Bank promote the "ecosystem approach" to aquaculture management as a means to increase the sustainability of aquaculture. By working together, aquaculture will indeed address most of the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which were adapted in 2015 for completion by 2030. Proper management of aquaculture will help achieve SDG's such as zero hunger, good health and well-being, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, climate action, and life below water, among others. The Aquaculture industry must utilize this opportunity to address climate change and the security of our food system, thereby helping to avoid another global disaster.

Our job as an industry is to feed people, an essential function of society. In order to attain this goal, we must expand the capacity for sustainable food production, both through increased farming and reduction of waste. In addition to supporting farmers and reducing personal waste, consumers must work to develop their own sustainable dietary profile. It is the only way we will be able to feed the projected global population of 10 billion people. Our capable scientists will win the war with COVID-19; as Oprah said, we will return to normal but it will be a 'new normal.' Partnership is and will remain a cornerstone of creating a better 'new normal.'

As our regular readers know, I am a champion for partnership. This Earth Day, I really want to encourage us all to reflect on how we can work together to create the life and planet that we want. CTSA will release our FY20 Request for Pre-Proposals early next month through our website www.ctsa.org. We look forward to reading your ideas on how we can... [Read More](#)

CTSA Creates New 'Aquaculture Resource Network' to Help Connect Producers and Suppliers

CTSA is pleased to announce that we are expanding on the services we offer for farmers, researchers, and other stakeholders in our region with the creation of the *CTSA Aquaculture Resource Network*.



The intention of the *Network* is to create a place where farmers and researchers looking for resources such as seedstock can connect with local suppliers, from University hatcheries to private industry. CTSA is often the recipient of requests for seedstock. Farmers often describe a lack of local supply in their town. CTSA is happy to help connect them to the right people.

If you are a seedstock supplier of any species in the CTSA region (Hawaii, American Samoa, Palau, Guam, CNMI, RMI, and FSM), please let us know the species you have and the general quantity available for local distribution. We will add your information to our network. We are creating a form to enter this information on our new CTSA website, and in the meantime request that you please email mbrooks@ctsa.org with details.

The *Network* is just one feature of the new CTSA website that is currently under development. Keep an eye out for the release of our new site later this year!

Creating the Best 'New Normal:' Preserving our Resources by Investing in Sustainability

by Meredith Brooks, CTSA Information Specialist

As the coronavirus pandemic continues to impact lives and economies across the globe, normal life as we know it has -at least for the moment- shifted to a period of uncertainty for many people and industries. The World Trade Organization projects that trade may fall up to 32% in 2020 as supply chains and other economic activities are disrupted due to the virus. Few industries are immune to the impacts of the pandemic. Indeed, agriculture and aquaculture have been affected. 90% of U.S. aquaculture farmers who responded to the recent NAA COVID-19 survey indicated that their business has been impacted, with 80% indicating that private (non-government) contracts or orders have been canceled due to the pandemic.



It is not an overstatement to say that we rely on agriculture to live. From small-scale regenerative farming to large-scale production, farmers provide society with one of its most essential services. Without farmers, there would be no food. Now, during a global pandemic, the general public is realizing just how essential food security is. From those who are helping neighbors and donating to food banks, to others who are nervously hoarding food at the grocery store despite assurances that there is plenty of food in the U.S., we are seeing how society responds to impacts to personal food security during a global disaster. In many areas, food insecurity and poverty are growing, and there are serious concerns that the [economic fallout from this pandemic will push a half billion people into poverty](#).

Outbreaks are limiting the capabilities of some [large terrestrial protein plants](#), and agriculture labor shortages are a growing concern. The aquaculture and fisheries industries are also feeling

the impacts from a major slowdown of global exports of shrimp and other seafood. Development projects across the world have been put on hold. It will be some time before the true toll is understood. While we are limited in the actions we can take at the moment, this pandemic is creating an opportunity for us to consider the best way to build and rebuild moving forward to ensure our food and economic security.

Many media outlets have shared articles detailing the broader impacts of the pandemic, including a [Washington Post article](#) that contends this is an experiment in a new way of living. Some of the shifts we have made will certainly be short term, but others are projected to remain in place. Consumer behaviors and supply chains are under a microscope, and it is evident that there is some need for adjustment on a global scale. In light of Earth day, it is warranted to consider some of the shifts we should consider adopting and expanding on as we strive towards a brighter future.

One of the greatest shifts on display is the way in which humans interact with the natural world. From climate change to wildlife, we are seeing undeniable demonstrations of human impacts (and lack thereof) on the environment. With more people working from home than anytime in recent history, there are fewer cars on the road and planes in the sky. There is some remarkable evidence that natural systems are rebounding with the decrease in human outdoor activities. Satellites have detected [less pollution in the air](#), people can see fish and [wildlife in the canals of Venice](#) for the first time in decades, and turtles are successfully nesting on crowd-free beaches in Central America. [Recent surveys](#) found that fish and native algae populations in Hanauma Bay—an often-crowded Oahu landmark that is famous for its beautiful reef—and other reefs across the Hawaiian Islands are increasing. The long-term impacts of these short-term changes have yet to be understood; either way, nature is indeed demonstrating the impacts that we as a species have on all other living things. While it may not be realistic to make the type of sweeping changes necessary to have these immediate results become permanent, some modicum of changes to our collective behaviors to increase sustainability can lead to significant changes down the road.

With Climate Change and a food crisis looming as a serious potential global disaster, focusing on sustainability can help to improve human and environmental health as well as the health and stability of both the economy and food supply. Current concerns over the status of the global economy are valid. The pandemic has unearthed cracks in fragile systems of order across the world. Some are calling this a perfect time to reconsider our investments on a global scale. One emerging system that prominently features aquaculture is the Blue Economy, which encompasses the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods and jobs, and ocean ecosystem health. The Blue Economy is comprised of many sectors, including aquaculture, transportation, tourism and recreation, and coastal resilience. These are all industries that could flourish in the Pacific Region under the right circumstances.

Aquaculture is a cornerstone of the emerging Blue Economy. Sustainable technologies in aquaculture, from mariculture to IMTA farming of bivalves and algae, can support the food system and create jobs, markets, and opportunities for people around the world. Utilizing coastal resources to produce more food, reduce dependence on imported goods, and help restore ecosystems is a boon for humans and the environment. As we collectively pause and re-evaluate the structure of our economy, it is time to consider shifting our focus to sustainably mitigating the impacts of our changing climate and addressing other global issues.

During these trying times, many people are reconnecting or connecting with nature for the first time as they search for opportunities to 'escape.' This connection to nature will help lay the foundation that is necessary to enact a sea change to a more sustainable and secure food system and planet. Hopefully, as we emerge from this season, we can consider... [Read More](#)

Hawai'i News Brief: HDOA Reviewing Applications for COVID-19 Emergency Farmer Relief Program

The Hawai'i Department of Agriculture (HDOA) is currently reviewing requests for assistance

under the COVID-19 Emergency Farmer Relief Program which offers some financial assistance to qualified farmers, ranchers and producers who have experienced damage to their operations due to COVID-19.

The funds for the program, totaling \$250,000, are being utilized from the State's barrel tax fund (Agriculture Development and Food Security Special Fund) which was made available through Gov. David Ige's March 4 emergency proclamation. Relief funds may be used to help utilize an oversupply of agricultural products resulting from the decreased demand due to closures of restaurants, schools and other businesses.

Applications were accepted until March 27, 2020 and 333 proposals were received, requesting a total of more than \$1.2 million dollars. However, since the available program funding totaled about \$250,000, proposals are being reviewed and prioritized for distribution.

Under the emergency program, eligible applicants including individual farming operations may receive a maximum of \$2,000. Also, non-profit organizations, commodity groups, agricultural associations with 501(c)(3) status may apply for a maximum of \$10,000 in relief funds. The review and award process is expected to be completed next week and funds are expected to be distributed later this month.

"The overwhelming number of requests is an indication on how this crisis is severely impacting Hawai'i's agricultural industries," said Gov. David Ige. "This COVID-19 situation makes us all more appreciative of our local food producers and acutely underscores why increasing our state's food security has been so very important."

"We all need to make sure that our farmers, ranchers and other food producing operations can survive through and eventually recover from this crisis," said Phyllis Shimabukuro-Geiser, chairperson of the Hawai'i Board of Agriculture (HBOA). "We ask that Hawai'i consumers continue to support our local farmers and food producers through direct and indirect sales at farmers' markets and community-supported agricultural efforts. Buy local, it matters."

Source: [Hawaii Department of Agriculture / Read Article](#)

AquaClip: Coronavirus concerns spur seafood industry to launch health-focused campaign

A newly-formed coalition of U.S. seafood industry organizations is launching a 12-week consumer marketing campaign to encourage Americans to eat more seafood during the coronavirus crisis.

The Seafood4Health Action Coalition includes 22 participating organizations, including the Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute; Aquaculture Stewardship Council; Aquarium of the Pacific, Seafood for the Future; Chilean Salmon Marketing Council; Coastal Culinary Academy; FishChoice; FishWise; FMI: The Food Industry Association, Seafood Strategy Leadership Council; Genuine Alaska Pollock Producers; Global Aquaculture Alliance; Global Salmon Initiative; Maine Aquaculture Association; Maine Coast Fishermen's Association; Marine Stewardship Council; Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch; National Fisheries Institute, NOAA Fisheries & Aquaculture; Pacific Seafood Processors Association; Sea Pact Seafood Harvesters of America; Seafood Nutrition Partnership; and SeaShare.

The coalition's new campaign, "Eat Seafood, America," is aimed at helping Americans stay healthy during the COVID-19 public health crisis, with a secondary goal of helping to boost the U.S. seafood economy, which includes two million U.S. workers, according to the Seafood Nutrition Partnership, which organized the Seafood4Health Action Coalition. SNP is a nonprofit organization formed in 2013 to address seafood deficiency in Americans' diets and to build awareness of the health and nutritional benefits of seafood.

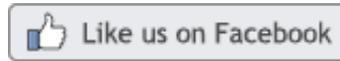
The multi-pronged marketing effort encourages consumers to boost their immune system by

eating seafood weekly, SNP said in its announcement.

"In addition to staying home and social distancing, staying healthy with good food and nutrition is one thing we can do to help boost our immune system and reduce the suffering from the COVID-19 pandemic," it said. "We all need to do our part to stay healthy and take pressure off our healthcare system. Higher intakes of specific nutrients appear to boost the immune system and reduce inflammation in the body, and fish and shellfish are rich in many of these important nutrients."

Source: [Seafood Source](#) / [Read Article](#)

www.ctsa.org



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 grants 2014-38500-22241, 2016-38500-25751, and 2018-38500-28886. 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 Oceanic Institute of Hawaii Pacific University and the University of Hawaii.

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