CENTER FOR TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AQUACULTURE

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Letter from the Director

Aloha,

As we all know, the new U.S. administration is bringing many mandates to Capitol Hill. One of those mandates at the Department of Health is to address chronic disease issues and improve human health across the United States. Based on the USDA's nutritional guidelines, seafood can play an important role in this mandate. Although the per capita consumption of seafood in the U.S. still does not meet the recommended levels, a recent study showed that American consumers are purchasing seafood at an increased frequency (from 30% to 32% in 2024). Can we meet the increasing demand through seafood that is "Made (Produced) in the US"?

We currently import 70-80% of the seafood we consume. As I often discuss in my monthly letters, we must start producing more to keep up with demand. Furthermore, we must ensure that our seafood comes from safe sources. The FDA is doing its best but is only able to inspect small portions of imported seafood to detect potentially harmful substances across all seafood imports. Unfortunately, we have limited manpower to guarantee the quality of imported products, and some imported seafood may not meet our standards. Increasing U.S. production will not only improve safety through rigorous standards, but it will also eventually lower the cost of seafood, which is often more expensive than other proteins. These are all goals that fall under the mission of our program: to help farmers be profitable while producing quality, affordable U.S. seafood products.

In an effort to expand the reach of our mission and impacts of our funded projects, CTSA held a meeting last week with aquaculture researchers across the region. The purpose of the meeting was to help them understand our program goals and the type of projects we fund so they may design and conduct research that is truly helpful to farmers. We also let the researchers know that CTSA is in the same boat --aiming to help farmers-- and is ready to help them administratively. It is an objective of the RAC program to facilitate this type of dialogue between researchers, farmers, and funding agencies like ours. We also just held our annual Board of Directors meeting to approve the FY24 Plan of Work. Among other positive outcomes from the meeting, I am pleased to see our new Board Chair, Dr. Parwinder Grewal strongly emphasizing the importance of serving the local farming industry. Both meetings reminded me of the importance of working together to achieve our shared goals to produce more safe seafood.

On that note, we request that you please take theCTSA FY25 Funding Priorities Survey. It should only take a few minutes to complete. This year, we are asking stakeholders to help choose priority species that need additional research to achieve their full commercial potential. If you don't use your voice, your priorities might not be addressed and we might miss out on your good ideas. Thank you in advance for your input!

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

Attention Aquaculture Community: Help CTSA Determine Priority Species and Areas for the Next Funding Cycle. Complete the Priorities Survey by April 15!

CTSA is gathering input on regional aquaculture development and would like to hear from you, our valued industry stakeholders!

If you have not already done so, please take a few

minutes to complete the survey by April 15.

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FY25 Funding Priorities Survey

Each Spring, CTSA releases a Request for Pre-Proposals based on industry input from our 'Funding Priorities' survey. The survey has been redesigned this year to help us assess the top priority species for development in Hawaii and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands. We want to focus on working with species that have already been started in the region and just need additional support to either achieve full commercial potential or address problems of established industries. Therefore, the first questions of the survey list out all of the species that CTSA has invested in developing since our program inception. Respondents are asked to select a **maximum of five** top priority species from the list for Hawaii and a **maximum of three** top priority species from the list for the U.S. affiliated Pacific Islands, and then use the checkbox grid to indicate which areas of production need support. These maximum amounts represent 1/3 of the total amount of species listed for each location; this will help us assess the **top** priorities for our next round of funding.

This survey also lists the priority areas included in our FY24 'Request for Pre-Proposals,' released last year, and requests that participants indicate whether or not each area remains a priority for regional aquaculture development and funding support. There is an option to write in new priority areas that were not identified in FY24. **Please complete the survey by April 15**; it should only take a couple of minutes and will greatly assist our process. We will release the FY2025 Request for Pre-Proposals in the April issue of e-Notes, and are developing the priority areas with essential input from our Industry Advisory Council, Technical Committee, Board of Directors, and stakeholders like you!

If you have any questions or need assistance completing the form, please email ctsa@hawaii.edu.

AquaClip: Governor pushes for study on aquaculture industry on Guam

Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero is pushing to get federal funding for a study that would look at developing an aquaculture industry on Guam.

Leveraging a supplemental application with the U.S. Economic Development Administration, Leon Guerrero wrote to U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross seeking support for funding a 12-month aquaculture feasibility study.

The study will determine market demand in this region of the world, growth opportunities, and needed investments.

According to a release from Adelup, the push is part of her fulfilling a promise she made during her 2020 State of the Island Address to develop a roadmap to kick-start Guam's aquaculture industry.
“Natural disasters and COVID-19 have taught us that food security is just as important as economic security. If we can use the gifts of sea and soil to feed our families and strengthen our economy, we have an obligation to try,” said Leon Guerrero.

In her letter, she underscores the need to have a viable secondary industry to complement an unpredictable tourism industry that is heavily dependent on the economic conditions of the Asia Pacific region, which is constantly threatened by natural disasters, such as Typhoon Mangkhut, which led to Guam being designated as a \major disaster area in 2018.

“Developing an aquaculture industry has always been a top priority for this administration and we’ve taken meaningful steps to reach that goal,” said Leon Guerrero. “But we are now seeing what the impacts of back to back disasters can have on our economy so we must act with more urgency.”

Farming bacteria-free shrimp may just be Guam's ticket to becoming the aquaculture capital of the Pacific, which could rake in billions of dollars in annual revenue in this side of the world, Leon Guerrero said last year.

Source: Pacific Daily News // Read 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 U.S. established and funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). The regional aquaculture centers integrate individual and institutional expertise and resources in support of commercial aquaculture development.
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CTSA was established in 1986 and is administered by the University of Hawaii.

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