CENTER FOR TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AQUACULTURE

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Letter from the Director

Aloha,

As you may already know, a new Farm Bill is under Congressional review and the Regional Aquaculture Centers (RACs) are hopeful that we will receive strong support on Capitol Hill for our longstanding program. I would like to express a *mahalo nui loa* (big thanks) to the individuals who submitted testimonies to the U.S. Congress on behalf of the RAC program and national aquaculture development. I especially appreciate the individuals from Hawai'i and Palau who participated in this critical annual process; their testimonies provide concrete examples of how our regional industry can apply CTSA-funded work to improve regional farming operations. This year, we were met with a rapid turnaround time to submit letters and we greatly appreciate the submitters' willingness to provide testimony on short notice. While each letter is unique, both of the submissions from our region discussed the importance of training and education in the ongoing dialogue of aquaculture development. Indeed, workforce development remains a top priority --as identified by industry-- for building aquaculture capacity. However, it is just one of the essential building blocks that must come together if we want to see a sustainable industry in our remote island region.

On that note, we are excitedly anticipating the arrival of your FY24 Pre-Proposals! As shared in last month's issue of e-Notes, CTSA has released the FY24 Request for Pre-Proposals (included again in this issue). **Pre-proposals are due to CTSA by June 10, 2024** We are looking forward to learning about a new set of research and demonstration project ideas to address industry needs and accelerate sustainable aquaculture farming in the Pacific Islands. As we have expressed in recent years, a deficit of aquaculture researchers in our region has limited our reach; we are hopeful that there will be enough projects this year to fully utilize our available funding from the USDA to carry out our program mission and help grow our regional industry. Please help us spread the word and encourage more researchers from various fields to work together for healthy seafood. Our IAC and TC members are looking forward to discussing your ideas during their annual meeting in mid-July. We also plan to host a meeting to present our progress on locally made feed and to solicit your input (tentatively on July 25 - keep an eye out for the announcement).

On a sad note, we recently learned that our friend and colleague Donghuo Jiang (pictured) passed away. DH was instrumental in advancing aquaculture technology in Guam through CoreSeed Aqua Corp and served an active role on the CTSA Technical Committee since 2020. While we are devastated to learn of his passing, I am pleased to hear that there are efforts underway to continue his good work. We extend our sincere condolences to his wife Dr. Hui Gong, family, and all who had the pleasure of knowing and working with him. As I always say, partnership is the cornerstone of our program and regional aquaculture development, and we must honor all who have worked and are working tirelessly to achieve our shared goals.

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

CTSA FY2024 Request for Pre-Proposals - Due June 10!

Last month, CTSA released the **FY2024 Request for Pre-Proposals**. The Request lists the top priority areas and species as identified by industry stakeholders in Hawaii and the U.S. Affiliated Pacific Islands, as well as instructions for submitting a pre-proposal by the deadline of 5pm HST on **Monday, June 10**. CTSA uses a standard form for all pre-proposal submissions. Pre-proposal forms can be

downloaded on the **CTSA website** or via request to mbrooks@ctsa.org.

Pre-proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed by CTSA's Industry Advisory Council (IAC) and Technical Committee (TC). Pre- proposals that receive a majority of votes will move forward with requests for a full proposal.

CTSA's mission is to support aquaculture research, development, demonstration, and extension education in order to enhance viable and profitable aquaculture in the United States. Our main focus is on funding projects that will have immediate, positive impacts on the regional aquaculture industry. FY 2024 Strategic Areas & Priority Species include Innovations in Aquaculture Technology, Aquatic Feed Development, Finfish Farming Technology, Macroalgae/ Microalgae, Aquatic Animal Health, Hawaiian Fishponds, and others.

Register Now to Join CTSA at the USDA SBIR/STTR Seminar at UH Manoa or on Zoom: June 12!

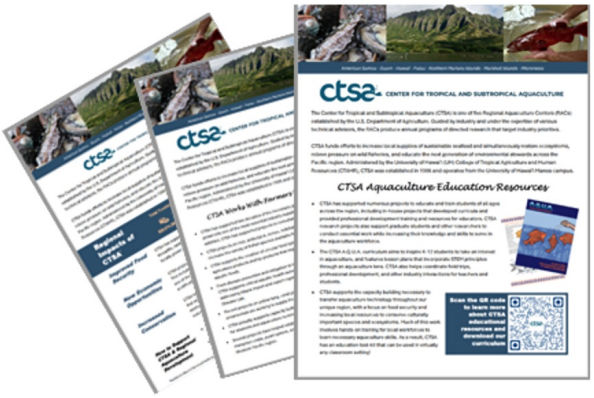
Join us for an insightful workshop dedicated to unveiling opportunities in aquaculture innovation through the USDA's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Whether you're a budding entrepreneur, a researcher in the aquaculture field, or an innovator looking for funding to bring your ideas to life, this event is for you!

Featured Guest Speakers are Melinda Coffman, Program Coordinator, SBIR/STTR, USDA NIFA and Timothy Sullivan, National Program Leader, Animal Health & Aquaculture, USDA NIFA. These esteemed speakers will provide an in-depth look into the funding opportunities available for aquaculture innovations, share insights on how to successfully apply for these non-dilutive funds, and highlight the impact of these programs on the aquaculture industry.

Who Should Attend
- Entrepreneurs and small business owners in the aquaculture sector
- Researchers and academics focusing on aquaculture innovation
- Individuals interested in non-dilutive funding opportunities for aquaculture projects

Don't miss out on this unique opportunity to dive deep into aquaculture innovation funding.Register now to secure your spot for either the online webinar or in-person viewing at one of our locations.
For more information, visit the event page at GerminateHawaii.com.

New Outreach Tools to Promote CTSA Projects and Program Impacts



CTSA has been working on new outreach materials to connect with aquaculture stakeholders and share information about our program and project impacts. As part of this effort, we are creating CTSA fact sheets for different audiences including educators, industry/farmers, and legislators & the general public. Each fact sheet features information relevant to the audience and a unique QR code that leads to the corresponding section of our website.

In addition, we have joined the Aquaculture Information Exchange (AIE), a new online community involving individuals from both the public and private sectors with interests in U.S. aquaculture and related topics. The site features subject matter work groups that can have access restricted to a small team or be open to any member of the AIE. Teams can store document files, image files, and video files but can also use built-in collaboration tools like video conferencing and group-editable documents. CTSA looks forward to building out our group page and related activities on the site over time. Click here to visit the CTSA group page on AIE.

We are also working on new videos for our YouTube and Vimeo Channels, as well as other social media content - keep an eye out this summer for more! We encourage our stakeholders --especially our Board of Directors and members of the Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee-- to share information

about CTSA and the RAC program with your respective audiences. The new fact sheets and social media activity will be valuable tools for virtual and in-person outreach.

All outreach materials are available in the Outreach & Education section of the CTSA website

Southern Regional Aquaculture Center Releases Request for Pre-Proposals

The USDA NIFA Southern Regional Aquaculture Center is conducting a *Request for Pre-proposals* (RFPs) for 3 priority projects identified at the SRAC Annual meeting. The RFPs are:

- Investigation of Visual Capabilities of Finfish Species to Inform Larviculture Lighting Protocols
- Evaluating Plant Extracts as Antibiotic Alternatives for Aquaculture
- Development of Lateral Flow Immunoassays for use in Aquaculture

These projects will be developed using the "Comprehensive Proposal Method" where a team of multi-state scientists, having demonstrated records of expertise in the subject, complete a single pre-proposal that addresses all project objectives. One proposal will be selected for funding based on review by a committee of scientists not involved in any of the proposals that are submitted.

We encourage you to apply for these projects if they are in your area of expertise. If not, please forward a copy of this e-mail to regional colleagues who might be interested. A copy of the *RFPs* and a copy of the *Guidelines for Writing a SRAC Pre-Proposal (Comprehensive)* are attached and can also be found at http://www.srac.msstate.edu/whatsnew.html. The *Guidelines* document includes format instructions, descriptions of new proposal requirements and budget category opportunities, and a pre-proposal example. Some of these requirements are relatively new, so applicants should read the guidelines carefully.

Project teams wishing to participate in this proposed area of research and Extension activity should submit their pre-proposal by July 20, 2024. Send an electronic copy (Word) of the pre-proposal to the SRAC Director (jimmy.avery@msstate.edu). If you have any questions about the application process, please send these requests to Kristen Thompson, SRAC Business Manager, at k.thompson@mssstate.edu. Pre-proposals received after this date will not be considered.

Aquaculture Training and Careers Updates: Job Postings

Live Advantage Bait LLC (LAB), a warmwater marine fish hatchery for baitfish and foodfish and a grow-out facility for multiple species of baitfish, is seeking a full-time AQUACULTURE TECHNICIAN for their fish hatchery and grow-out facility in Fort Pierce, FL. with an intended start date prior to June 15, 2024. Each staff member will be cross trained in several areas of our facility, but this position will focus on aiding in maintaining our extensive multi-species hatchery.

AquaClip: USDA Funding Supports Aquaculture and Resilience in Hawaii and Micronesia

"Aquaculture is agriculture," said Simon Ellis, executive director of The Marine and Environmental Research Institute of Pohnpei (MERIP) based in Kolonia, a city on the island of Pohnpei in the Federated States of Micronesia. For the last 20 years, this humanitarian, not-for-profit organization has provided less advantaged Micronesian communities with environmentally sustainable and economically viable skills to produce agricultural products for international markets. The underlying objective of teaching Micronesian and Hawaiian farmers effective techniques and business practices is to allow for self-sustenance as a primary goal, with aspirations of economic advancement as a small business. MERIP also helps farmers in securing start-up financing, small business development, marketing training, and access to international buyers.

This type of "water farming" is the focus of the 2501 Program grant awarded to MERIP to help increase agricultural participation in USDA programs in Hawaii and the Federated States of Micronesia. The 2501 Program helps underserved and veteran agricultural producers successfully own and operate farms in various ways. Aquaculture, the fastest-growing facet of agriculture, is defined as growing any animal or plant in water. Although aquaculture may not be as well-known as traditional agriculture, its harvests are in every grocery store's seafood department. Aquaculture also has strong ties in the supplement and beauty sectors, with over an $80 million industry in Hawaii alone, promising a brighter economic future for local water-farming communities.

2501 funding has played a crucial role in advancing MERIP's mission and empowered the organization to engage at all stages of the process and development cycle for underserved farmers. For instance, some of the funding has been used to hire legal assistance for the complicated permitting process for aquaculture farms, identified as a significant obstacle to beginning aquaculture producers.

Morralace Falcam is a farmer in Pohnpei and a testament to the transformative power of MERIP's work powered by USDA funding. "Fish have become harder to catch, and food at the store is more expensive than before," he said. "Growing clams will help to feed my family, and I hope I can grow enough to sell in the local market." A staggering statistic is that many rural Micronesians have an annual per capita income of only around $1,000. MERIP aims to help local farmers participating in their programs make an additional one thousand dollars annually for four hours of aquaculture a week, a significant step towards a better future.

Source: USDA Public Affairs // Read Original 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 2020-38500-32559 and 2022-38500-38099. The regional aquaculture centers integrate individual and institutional expertise and resources in support of commercial aquaculture development.
CTSA was established in 1986 and is administered by the University of Hawaii.

Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture
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