CENTER FOR TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AQUACULTURE

Regional e-Notes ~ October 2024 ~ Volume 16, Issue 10

Letter from the Director

Aloha and Happy Halloween,

October is a month of many celebrations! In addition to celebrating National Seafood month, it is also Farm to School month here in Hawaii. In line with these observances, I am pleased to report that CTSA has been working hard to enhance the role of fish farming in food security in Hawaii. Our goal is to not only connect farms to your dinner table, but to also incorporate research findings into the seafood supply chain to improve sustainable yields.

Under our 'Aquaculture Information Services' project, CTSA regularly shares the results and products of our funded projects with the public to help our island residents better understand how aquaculture protects our environment, creates job opportunities, and improves local food security and the economy. We did this most recently at the NELHA 50th anniversary event on October 19 in Kona (pictured). I would like to extend a big Mahalo to our administrative staff Maggie Ma, who coordinated with NELHA to arrange and manage our exhibition booth at the event, described in detail in the article below. My appreciation also extends to Lara Hackney (CTAHR) and Dr. Harry Ako for participating at our booth and helping share our mission.

On a final note, as we shared in last month's e-Notes, the role of women in aquaculture is growing increasingly important, and I am happy to see the launch of “Women in Ocean Food 2025.” Through this initiative, Hatch Blue in collaboration with Conservation International Ventures LLC is inviting women with businesses operating throughout the blue economy to apply to an intensive 10-day Innovation Studio. More details are included in the article below

Mahalo,
CSL

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

CTSA Joins NELHA's 50th Anniversary Celebration

CTSA recently participated in the ‘Host Park Open House’ to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawai‘i Authority (NELHA), home to several key innovative aquaculture businesses and activities. The all-day event on October 19 featured farm and nursery tours, interactive exhibits and demonstrations by more than 30 HOST Park tenants and community partners, hands-on keiki activities, and live entertainment.

“The free open house event showcases many park clients,” said Noelani Kalipi, NELHA Chair. “This provides an opportunity for community members to learn about projects

that do important work in sustainability, conservation, food and energy security."

At the CTSA booth, participants were invited to learn more about the Regional Aquaculture Center program and CTSA projects and initiatives. Our booth featured publications and other resources created specifically to share the benefits of aquaculture with the public. Long-time CTSA partner and researcher Dr. Harry Ako talked story with visitors about his CTSA-funded aquaponics projects in Hawaii and American Samoa, while Lara Hackney of CTAHR shared information about the nutritional benefits of eating seafood. The unique highlight of our booth was an interactive Virtual Reality (VR) experience presented by CTSA administrative staff Maggie Ma.

The experience is the product of a recent CTSA project "Development of an Immersive Virtual Reality Experience for Increasing Engagement in Aquaculture," led by Dr. Jason Leigh. The project explored the use of VR capture and display technology to help overcome current outreach limitations. Access to aquaculture facilities is highly restricted, making the outreach of aquaculture practices to the community difficult and limited. At the same time, knowledge of the aquaculture industry among the public often consists of misconceptions and prejudices. The result is declining interest in those considering aquaculture as a future career. The goal of the project was to create a virtual aquaculture experience that allows individuals to experience various aspects of aquaculture as a profession without having to be physically present at an aquaculture facility.

The VR project was conducted in partnership with the Oceanic Institute of HPU Finfish Department, which provided the primary setting for the VR experience. The project group used stereoscopic 3D, 360 video capture and 3D photogrammetry to capture physical aquaculture sites for reconstruction into a VR experience where users can engage in interactive quests where they learn about aquaculture from virtual experts.

At the NELHA Open House, visitors donned VR headsets to test out the experience. CTSA received valuable feedback on the program and ways to improve future VR aquaculture products. Participants shared that by the end of the experience, they understood different types of fish, average lifespan, and other traits, and expressed that it is a good educational tool to get more people involved in aquaculture.

NELHA is a state agency, attached to the State of Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT). NELHA administers an energy and ocean technology demonstration site, the Hawai'i Ocean Science and Technology (HOST) Park, focused on sustainable economic development projects and blue technology. This unique master-permitted park is on 870 acres of prime coastal property in Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i and offers research support facilities for the development of marine science, renewable energy and other demonstration projects that use the unique resources found at the park. Tenants located in HOST Park work at the pre-commercial, commercial, research and educational levels.

Women in Ocean Food 2025 - Call for Applications

Hatch Blue and Conservation International are excited to announce the launch of the Women In Ocean Food Innovation Studio 2025. The organizations are teaming up to look for women-led projects and businesses ranging throughout the ocean food sector. Focus will include (but is not limited to) those operating in: Aquaculture Health, Genetics, Feed, Hardware & Software; Downstream Solutions for Seafood Processing, Upcycling Waste, Cold Chain; Conservation including Marine Tech,

Sustainable Fisheries, Regenerative Aquaculture; Blue Carbon; and Seaweed Value Chain Innovation.

This is the 4th iteration of the intensive 10-day Women In Ocean Food Innovation Studio, which offers participants valuable resources including 1-to-1 mentorship from industry experts; engagement with local farms; opportunities to showcase their innovations to key regionally-focused investors and stakeholders; and access to Hatch Blue and Conservation International global networks and communities.

The Studio will take place January 6-16, 2025 in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico. The deadline for applications is Friday, November 29, 2024. Click here for more information.

Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee Asks Aquaculture Farmers to Complete Marine Mammal Deterrent Survey

NOAA's advisory body- the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC)- is gathering information about marine mammal interactions in fisheries an aquaculture of the US. MAFAC has released a survey to gather knowledge and perceptions about the nature of marine mammal interactions and use of deterrents currently employed by commercial, recreational, and tribal fishermen; aquaculture farmers; and marina and coastal property owners and managers.

Developed in response to a request from NOAA Fisheries, the data collected will be used to create an index to identify the relative effectiveness of different allowable deterrents used by various user groups nationwide to reduce the risk of expected losses from damage by marine mammals on various user groups nationwide. The ultimate goal is to help NOAA Fisheries identify and prioritize those marine mammal deterrents that should be tested for their effectiveness to safely deter marine mammals and protect fishing gear/catch and property.

If you are an aquaculture farmer; commercial, recreational, or tribal fishermen; or a coastal property owner or manager, please visit this link to complete the survey. The survey is open until November 22, 2024.

Aquaculture Jobs

Mississippi State University's National Warmwater Aquaculture Center (NWAC) has posted a position for an Aquatic Scientist/Water Quality position. Click here for more information.

Auburn University has a posted position for an Assistant/Associate Professor - Genomicist, Aquatic Organisms. Click here for more information.

Maryland Shellfish Growers Aquaculture Conference

The Maryland Shellfish Growers Network is pleased to host the 2024 Maryland Shellfish Aquaculture Conference. Join us to learn the latest about the shellfish aquaculture industry from growers, scientists, managers, and industry leaders. The conference will be held on Nov 12, 2024 at the Westin in Annapolis MD. The conference is organized by University of Maryland Extension, the Maryland Shellfish Growers Network, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation.

This year aquaculture industry members are offered a discounted registration rate to maximize opportunities for networking and information sharing. Select the *Industry Member* ticket when registering to receive the discounted rate. Click here for more information and to register.

AquaClip: Honolulu Council Members Urge New Agricultural Task Force

The following are excerpts from an article describing a resolution to re-establish an agricultural task force in Honolulu. This news highlights the importance of local farming and the celebration of Farm to Table Month in Hawaii.

A plan to bring back the city's now-defunct Agricultural Development Task Force is being sown by some on the Honolulu City Council. Introduced by Council members Esther Kia'aina and Andria Tupola, Resolution 243 requests that the prior task force, which ended in 2019, be reconvened in order "to foster the growth and enhancement of agricultural activities on Oahu."

"The Council seeks to reconvene the task force to ensure that the Council's policy decisions continue to

reflect and incorporate the expertise of relevant agricultural stakeholders and practitioners," the resolution states.

As drafted, the new resolution could see the Council chair and vice chair jointly designate the members of the new task force, "which shall include at least one task force member with expertise in traditional Native Hawaiian agricultural practices and food systems."

"Historically, I always believe farmers get short-shrifted," Kia'aina told the Honolulu Star-Advertiser. "A lot of the things are in the forms of loans, for example." Instead, she said the task force's objectives might include investigating how to get more state or federal grant funding and other incentives to local farmers.

"My vision is to make the city a full partner in agricultural development, and I'm hoping to sustain it," she added. "And in order to sustain it, in my view, I need to demonstrate the moneys that they get helped to bolster their production."

If renewed, the task force also may be tasked with reviewing areas such as zoning, land use, infrastructure requirements, taxes, data gathering and analysis, food security, institutional purchasing and other demand--side improvements.

Other areas of focus would include bio-security — to deal with invasive species — as well as economic development, permitting and certifications, the resolution states.

Kia'aina said the task force would rely heavily on data gathering and analyses of the local agricultural industry — particularly for grant funding.

"For any grant that you apply for, you need to have a strong narrative backed up by data," she said, "and that's why it's so important for us to have critical data for agriculture because in order to bolster it, it just can't be in the field." She noted such data could "show how many farmers there are, what's the contributions to our economy, what are the major challenges for them."

"They need money, they need water, they need land," Kia'aina said. "They need capacity. Capacity not just for the farmers, but technical know-how for whatever industry they decide to go to — whether it's big farmers or fruit growers or aquaculture, for example."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's "2022 Census of Agriculture" notes the state of Hawaii has 6,569 farms located on 1.05 million acres. The individual farms range in size from 1 to over 2,000 acres.

Of those Hawaii-based farms, 1,002 were on Oahu, comprising a total of 60,254 acres. The estimated market value for an average farm on the island was pegged at $1.79 million, the census report states.

Source: Honolulu Star Advertiser // 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 | University of Hawaii at Manoa 1955 East West Road, Ag. Sci. 216 | Honolulu, HI 96822 US

Unsubscribe | Update Profile | Constant Contact Data Notice

Constant Contact

Try email marketing for free today!