CENTER FOR TROPICAL AND SUBTROPICAL AQUACULTURE

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Letter from the Director

Aloha!

During a recent vacation in eastern Europe, I was pleasantly surprised to come across a poke bowl store in the Kaubamajakas shopping center in Estonia (pictured). Seeing this piece of home in a land so far away made me realize the important role of food as a universal cultural identifier and connector. This includes food produced from aquaculture. It is our responsibility as an industry to ensure that sustainable aquaculture is well accepted by our local communities and that it contributes to the global community in the form of unique Hawaii-made products. I am looking forward to locally farmed species including sea asparagus, nenue, kahala and others shining in international markets. Working together to increase the reach of our regional products is an opportunity for us to improve the perception of aquaculture, within and beyond our shores.

As we have shared in recent months, CTSA is in the midst of our FY24 plan of work development. We have received the first set of full proposals --now undergoing external peer review-- and are looking forward to receiving the second set of proposals in the coming weeks. It is our annual goal that each project we fund will contribute to the sustainable development of aquaculture in our region, to both produce and conserve our valuable stocks. Again, I regret that our limited budget does not allow us to fund all of the pre-proposals we received, and I strongly encourage those that did not make it to the next round to try again in the future.

Indeed, solutions to many global problems can be found in our own backyard. A recent study by Yale researcher Alison Sweeney found that giant clams in the Western Pacific may be the most efficient solar energy system on the planet. Our brilliant engineers may someday learn from Giant clams how to multiply the current quantum efficiencies of solar panels. The study credits the development of Giant clam farming technologies in Palau for preserving this keystone species, and CTSA is proud of our contribution to that important work. I am confident that there are other species in the Pacific region possessing valuable functions that we have yet to uncover. CTSA would like to invite more scientists to explore these avenues and develop technologies that will both preserve species and discover new capabilities; this is the essence of what aquaculture can and should be.

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

September Summit Shines Spotlight on Women in Aquaculture

At the beginning of September, Aquaculture North America held the 2024 Women in North American Aquaculture Summit (WINAAS) dedicated to advocacy and empowerment in the aquaculture industry. This free virtual event takes place every year to shine a spotlight on women in North America's aquaculture industry who inspire, lead and encourage new generations of women entering the industry. The event featured live panel

discussions exploring topics such as fostering a diverse and inclusive workforce, the critical roles women hold in aquaculture, and more.

According to the FAO Status of World Fisheries and Aquaculture (2022), women now make up half of the overall workforce throughout the fisheries and aquaculture value chains. The report takes a deep dive into the many aspects and considerations of women and their roles in aquaculture, and makes the argument that women are key agents of change to achieving the Blue Transformation. As stated by the FAO director, “Women and girls can play a crucial role in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in particular in transforming our agri-food systems. We all need to work together to spark the necessary changes to empower women and girls, particularly those in rural areas.”

This year’s WINAA Summit featured three panels, which arenow available for streaming on the Aquaculture North America website. The first panel on Seafood and Gender Equality (SAGE) focused on leadership positions for women in aquaculture. The panel on Indigenous Stewardship featured women tribal members who are working within aquaculture companies talking about their roles and impacts in the industry. The third panel Women in Caribbean Aquaculture (WiCA) was comprised of women scientists of Caribbean origins dedicated to the growth of aquaculture in the Caribbean region, discussing their work to introduce more women into aquaculture and support those already working in the sector. All three panels featured thought-provoking discussions relevant to the CTSA region.

Since our inception in 1986, CTSA has taken an active role in women’s involvement in the regional aquaculture industry. From supporting the research and extension efforts of groundbreaking female aquaculture scientists to funding training in hatchery technologies and pearl jewelry making for Indigenous women in remote Pacific islands, our program is pleased to promote equitable and effective cooperation in issues related to gender in aquaculture. Some of our region's most influential aquaculture researchers and stakeholders are women, including those who serve on our Industry Advisory Council and Technical Committee; their voices are essential to our program development. In addition, three ongoing CTSA projects are led by women researchers.

Dr. Karla McDermid of UH Hilo is leading innovative research on macroalgae production in Hawaii, which has the potential to increase food supplies, restore habitats, and decrease carbon footprints. Dr. Yanghua He of UH Manoa is investigating genetic markers of thermal tolerance in shrimp, an essential consideration for farming amidst climate change. Dr. Maria Haws of UH Hilo (pictured with students) has led decades of important work on hatchery production and farming of bivalves and fish and has created a critical supply chain for local and mainland producers. She is also an active advocate for women in aquaculture, and had the following message when sharing information about the WINAA Summit:

“It was encouraging to see what has been accomplished and hear from a wide variety of perspectives. The seafood sector has some unique challenges and opportunities compared to aquaculture, so it was informative to see how advocates are making progress there. Even if you're not directly involved in aquaculture or seafood, this information can help us all make better choices when we choose our food sources.”

Click here to learn more about the annual summit and watch the videos from this year’s event.

NOAA MMPA Seeking Comments on New Aquaculture Classifications and Gear Types

The 2025 proposed Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) List of Fisheries is available for public inspection. The MMPA requires NOAA Fisheries to publish an annual list of commercial fisheries and classify each fishery based on whether it has frequent (Category I), occasional (Category II), or remote likelihood (Category III) of incidental mortality and serious injury of marine mammals.

This year's update includes new information and classifications for aquaculture. NMFS is seeking comments and information on these new classifications and gear types, and is accepting feedback through October 24, 2024. Click here for more.

NELHA Seeking New Executive Director

NELHA is seeking a visionary leader to elevate the Natural Energy Laboratory of Hawaii Authority, driving innovation and achieving its mission for Hawaii. Are you that person or know of someone who is capable? If so, send your resume by Oct. 9. Click here for more.

RAS Course at Freshwater Institute

Freshwater Institute is offering its in-person course on RAS this November. This four-day course presented by The Conservation Fund's Freshwater Institute covers the fundamentals of water recirculating systems for fish culture including unit processes, fish health & biosecurity, system operations & maintenance, and water quality monitoring. New for 2024 are modules covering emergency response, AI technology, finishing & harvesting, and troubleshooting. Course materials provided to participants include a binder of all presentations and the latest edition of the book, *Recirculating Aquaculture*. The course includes a tour of the RAS facilities at the Freshwater Institute. Click here for more.

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: College of Micronesia Land Grant Director Meets With Director of CTSA

Dr. Cheng Sheng Lee, Director of the Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture, recently paid a courtesy visit to the College of Micronesia Central Office in Pohnpei. Dr Lee was on an island-hopping mission to get recent updates on the aquaculture situation in the RMI and FSM. Dr. Lee congratulated ED Stanley on his new role as the Executive Director for the COM. Dr. Lee and ED Stanley discussed different topics pertaining to aquaculture in the region. Dr. Lee explained to ED Stanley about the CTSA Programs and funding opportunities. He further invited ED Stanley to take up the vacant COM Land Grant position at the CTSA Board of Directors. ED Stanley thanked him for the offer and let Dr. Lee know that he will discuss this offer with the COM Board of Regents in their next meeting.

Executive Director Stanley, Chief Scientist and Director of COM Aquaculture Program, Dr. Manoj Nair gave an updated overview of COM Aquaculture programs in the Micronesian region while senior extension agent Engly Ioanis highlighted the need and importance of sustainable feed for livestock. Dr. Lee and ED Stanley agreed to work on a comprehensive MOU between COM and CTSA for the efficient utilization of resources between the two USDA organizations to prevent wastage and duplication of efforts.

Source: College of Micronesia Land Grant // 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.

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