Shellfish Aquaculture in Dixie County

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Industry development—Florida’s Big Bend

In the 1990s due to:

- Job retraining programs for former fishermen and women
- Excellent leasing program and regulatory framework
- Year-round growing conditions
  - Fast growth rates
  - Short crop periods
  - Continuous production
Shellfish aquaculture retraining programs

- Federally-funded, community-based programs provided employment opportunities for fishermen affected by regulatory restrictions
  - “Hands-on” training
  - Classroom curriculum
  - Establishment of leases for program graduates
Retraining programs

- Served 4 coastal counties—Taylor to Citrus
- Culture technology transferred
- Over 200 former fishermen placed into small businesses
- 948 acres of leases established in Levy and Dixie Counties

Project OCEAN, 1991-3

Project WAVE, 1995-7

Graduation, 1993
Dixie County aquaculture use zones (AUZs)

500 acres of sovereign submerged lands dedicated to aquaculture
— 1993, 360 acres
— 1997, 64 acres
— 1999, 76 acres
Dixie County aquaculture use zones (AUZs)

Federally-funded, community-based programs provided employment opportunities for FL fishers affected by regulatory restrictions.

Horseshoe Beach AUZ

- 64 parcels, 128 acres
- 36% of parcels leased
- 13 parcels modified for water column use
Long Bar AUZ

- 19 parcels, 38 acres
- 63% of parcels leased
- 5 parcels modified for water column use
Shired Reef AUZ

- 39 parcels, 78 acres
- 31% of parcels leased
- Designated for bottom use only
Pine Island AUZ

- 128 parcels, 256 acres
- 4% of parcels leased
- Designated for bottom use only
Shellfish lease markers

Post, buoy and corner marker labels in this example are for reference only. Refer to your lease agreement for specific marker locations, types required and parcel/lease identification numbers. Refer to U.S. Coast Guard Private Aids to Navigation for lighting requirements.

Contact the Division of Aquaculture for assistance at (850) 617-7600.

**Shellfish lease markers**
Status

• 15 certified shellfish growers*
• 51 parcels leased (102 acres)*
  — 24 acres – hard clams
  — 14 acres – clams and oysters
  — 40 acres – oysters (bottom)
  — 24 acres – oysters (off-bottom)
• Minimum amount of seed planted per year – 5.3 million
  — 3.1M clams
  — 2.2M oysters

*Obtained from FDACS Division of Aquaculture
Status

- **FWC Trip Ticket Program**
  - Shellfish wholesalers not required to report aquaculture products

- **Florida Aquaculture Surveys**
  - Clam production, sales value, seed plantings

- **Economic Impacts**
  - $39M gross revenue impact
  - >550 jobs supported

- **National Aquaculture Census**
  - Conducted by USDA, every 5 years
  - $16M value of sales, 2018
Production limitations and risks

- Limited capital available for commercial startup
- Prevailing winds in summer push river discharge north
- Low salinities with high water temperatures detrimental to clam health and survival
- Environmental risks also include storms and hurricanes

https://shellfish.ifas.ufl.edu/water-quality-monitoring/horseshoe-beach/
Hard Clam Aquaculture in Florida
A SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRY

Providing

- JOBS in rural coastal communities
- ENVIRONMENTALLY BENEFICIAL ecosystem services
- HEALTHY, NUTRITIOUS and LOCALLY PRODUCED seafood

visit shellfish.ifas.ufl.edu