

RAMBLINGS NASAC NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JANUARY 2012

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I hope you all are doing well and the usual set of winter meetings are turning out to be pleasant ones. The weather has been up and down here ranging from the teens to seventy just in January. It served the Missouri Aquaculture Association well though since the day of their annual meeting was one of the unusually warm ones. They also had great speakers and great attendance so we were all pleased. Hopefully, a number of you will be able to enjoy some additional warmth at Aquaculture American in Las Vegas February 29 - March 2 (<https://www.was.org>). Speaking of meetings, please let me know if you'll be able to attend a NASAC meeting this year. My impression is that budgets are looking pretty grim still and travel isn't an option for many of us.

A number of good things have happened since the last newsletter and I'd like to share them with you.

The latest issue of the AADAP Newsletter <http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/aadap/newsletter.htm> shared that progress has been made on a number of issues concerning fish health. Notable to me was the progress on PEROX-AID to control *Gyrodactylus salmonis*; SLICE to control *Salmincola californiensis* (parasitic copepods); and AQUAFLO for the control of *Flavobacterium columnare* (columnaris) in all species of fish.

Approximately \$3,200,000 is available through the NOAA Sea Grant Aquaculture Research Program to fund marine aquaculture research projects. The details are available by going to Grants.gov and searching for Funding Opportunity Number: NOAA-OAR-SG-2012-2003249 or CDMA Number: 11.417. This is a two-stage competition, requiring pre-proposals and full proposals with pre-proposals due by February 7, 2012. The bad news is this will likely be the only aquaculture-specific competition for FY 2012 and there will be no National Marine Aquaculture Initiative (NMAI) competition for FY 2012.

The National Aquaculture Association has developed a narrated PowerPoint presentation, "U.S. Aquaculture: The New Face of Farming". It is a very good overview of US aquaculture and is on the NAA website <http://thenaa.net/the-industry/aquaculture-video>. Copies are also available from the NAA at (870) 850-7900 or naa@thenaa.net. It is about a 17 minute presentation and covers the history as well as the diversity of aquaculture. It would be great for classrooms or civic groups. The overall message is that U.S. aquaculture is safe and sustainable.

We are in the process of updating the aquaculture coordinator and aquatic health lists which are posted on the NASAC web site www.nasac.net. Each is an inclusive list that contains contact information for aquaculture coordinators and fish health professionals in each state. Thank you to everyone who submitted updates.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is preparing for an upcoming census and needs us to help them identify aquaculture producers whom they should contact. Please send a list of aquaculture producers in your state to Alan Lowther at Alan.Lowther@noaa.gov. If you have questions, you can also reach him at (301) 427-8154.

In November, I was able to share about NASAC with the USDA APHIS Aquaculture Liaisons. It was a great opportunity to brag on our organization. Each state has one of these federal vets who are familiar with our industry. They are a real resource for us and fish producers in each of our states. You can learn who they are by going to the NASAC web site and following the link to the USDA list.

Thank you for what you do. Please let me know what we can do to help you.

LYNNE CANTER, Editor
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VICE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF WNC

Parts from email sent by *Food & Water Watch* –

Every year, factory farms produce millions of gallons of manure, which often end up contaminating waterways and threatening human health (*not to mention producing such a strong odor that neighbors and farm workers suffer from intense headaches, nausea and other potentially long-term health problems*). Worst of all, we know very little about these massive polluters because they're not required to report on their pollution.

See the entire article at the end of the message

Folks – it always amazes me to see emails like this from *Food & Water Watch* wanting people/the public to respond to this post. Especially since the people who are likely to reply usually don't have the knowledge of science-based facts about commercial farming to complain to the EPA. Think about it, who is more likely to respond or contribute to this?

About “factory farming” – what does that term really mean? Is it the farmer who cultivates thousands of acres to produce food that will feed a multitude of people? Is it the farmer who raises cattle or hogs on a large scale and have invested literally thousands of dollars to comply with the environmental regulations that already exist and are truly working to improve or protect the ecosystem? Or can it mean the small family farmer who does not use sound conservation land management or husbandry practices and the environmental impact from the small farm is a significant as the larger farm, just not in the same scale?

It is time we revisited our terminology and objectives in all types of farming. Factory farming is a catch-all term to elicit negative responses and emotions. Is the objective of these NGO people to eradicate US farming? That creates several questions that the American people have to honestly answer - Do we want to feed our US citizens with food products produced in the US? Do we want to produce food products, raw or processed, that are exported to other countries to feed their people? Of course we do whether you're a farmer or consumer the objectives are the same – to produce or consume a good quality, food safe product.

The farmer wants to farm, make a decent wage, which has not happened for decades, and does what that farmers loves – producing agricultural products for a profit.

The consumers want to have wholesome food products that are safe to eat and are affordable.

What the farmer and consumer want does not have to be mutually exclusive. What will it take to bring these two to have a better understanding of each other – communication, education, and knowing the “real” facts? If each of us make an effort to reach out to the other then in small but meaningful ways this barrier of factoids and misconceptions can be changed one person at a time. Each of us has a responsibility to critically think about how to narrow this chasm ... the time to do that is now!

I like to make points through examples ... follows is my story to share. *Keep in mind that aquaculture is the only livestock production system that depends on water, a public resource!*

I had the opportunity to work with EPA on a national level for Rule Making to develop Effluent Limitations Guidelines for Concentrated Aquatic Animals. When we first began EPA had numerous listings of water quality impact or degradation due to aquaculture – the list was pretty lengthy. Our first mission was to check that list for “truth” – out of almost 100 references across the US it turned out that only two sites were causing nutrient impact. Both of those cases were being remedied at the beginning of the Rule Making. The Rule Making process took five years, a great deal of the time and funds of the aquaculture industries around the US, and countless hours of educating the EPA about aquaculture. This was a true learning experience for me.

For every email like the one below asking the public to comment the folks involved in agriculture need to counter the claims with science-based facts. Using science was the avenue that led to the ultimate final EPA Rule. No, not all of aquaculture was exempt to that regulatory scope but the outcome was cost-effective and “doable”. As farmers, resource personnel and informed citizens it is our “duty” to refute baseless claims that are sent out by NGOs.

I commit to do my part by responding to this email/EPA with the truth – the majority of farmers are doing a good job using Best Management Practices to be good stewards and conservationists. You have seen the phrase – “No farms No food” – we have to work to overcome the possibility that our American farmers and ranchers might be regulated out of business due to baseless claims and zealots whose perception is jaded by their agenda. This agenda is fueled by posts like this ... each of us have to take a stand to ensure America farmers can continue to farm!

Parts from email sent by *Food & Water Watch* – 01.11.12



Any Way You Look At It, Factory Farms Just Stink
[Demand the EPA enact strong pollution-reporting guidelines for factory farms](#)

Every year, factory farms produce millions of gallons of manure, which often end up contaminating waterways and threatening human health (*not to mention producing such a strong odor that neighbors and farm workers suffer from intense headaches, nausea and other potentially long-term health problems*). Worst of all, we know very little about these massive polluters because they're not required to report on their pollution.



Join us in asking the EPA to require factory farms to report the amount of pollution they produce.

The EPA is currently considering a rule that would require factory farms around the country to report on basic information, such as location, number of animals and amount of waste produced. Unfortunately, due to extreme pressure from big agribusiness, the current version of the rules contains many loopholes that severely limit the amount of information the agency will actually receive. We can't hold factory farms accountable without the necessary information about how much they're polluting.

You may not live next door to a factory farm, but we are all impacted by this ugly, dirty business. From the polluted rivers carrying waste downstream to the risk of food-borne illnesses in the food these farms produce, the dangers of factory farming are clear.

Tell the EPA to enact strong reporting rules for factory farms today:
http://action.foodandwaterwatch.org/p/dia/action/public/?action_KEY=9135

Patty Lovera
Food Program Director
Food & Water Watch
goodfood@fwwatch.org

<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/food/factoryfarms/>
This is another post about factory farming on their website.

What did you think? Did it make you wonder where the science-based facts are? Now, translate that message and apply it to aquaculture operations ...

AQUACULTURE NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATES

T. Robins Buck
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
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The Virginia Aquaculture Conference is held every year on the odd years and was recreated beginning in 2007, after an approximate 10 year lull. The 2011 version was held on November 18-19 in Williamsburg, and was quite successful. The Conference Organizers/Planning Committee includes:

- [Virginia Sea Grant Marine Extension Program](#)
- [Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services](#)
- [Virginia Farm Bureau Federation](#)
- [Virginia Aquaculture Association](#)
- [Virginia Institute of Marine Science/ College of William and Mary](#)
- [Virginia Tech](#)
- [Virginia State University](#)

A brief summary follows:

Attendance

- ♣ 187 conference registrants (increase of 23 from 2009)
- 51% registrants were industry
- 33% late registrations (same as 2009)
- ♣ 210 Gala reception tickets (increase of 34 from 2009)

Sponsorship

- ♣ 16 sponsors (increase of 12 from 2009)
- ♣ \$15,500 in sponsor revenue (increase of ~\$11,500 from 2009)

Vendors

- ♣ 18 vendors exhibits (increase of 7 from 2009)
- ♣ \$2,040 in vendor-only revenue (similar to 2009)
- *not including sponsors*

Evaluations

- ♣ 34 evaluations received (increase of 24 from 2009)
- 41% shellfish industry
- 15% finfish industry
- 32% Other -extension, government and student
- 12% Vendors

- ♣ Comments overall were positive on the session length and presentation relevance
- ♣ Comments were positive on staff and registration
- ♣ A few unsatisfactory remarks about the conference venue included temperature and confusing hotel layout

I have also included the website that brings-up the quick version of the Conference Agenda, should anybody want to take a look at topics, speakers, etc. <http://www.vaaquacultureconference.com/agenda.html>

I hope all is well with you, yours and all my NASAC friends and hopefully NASAC will meet in 2012 in VA???????

Robins

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<http://www.FloridaAquaculture.com>

The Endangered Species Act and Listed Species

A few aquafarms in the U.S. are interested in culturing species listed under the Endangered Species Act because they can be cultured, a critical hurdle, and because there are established market values. The most notable example is the Beluga sturgeon that was being grown by Florida aquaculturists when the species was listed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and there is also interest in several aquatic turtle species, Atlantic and shortnose sturgeons, and, potentially, other aquatic species.

Unfortunately, the Endangered Species Act does not allow commercial “exemptions” and even when a federal agency attempts to allow commercial use that effort has been opposed by the public. NASAC members might be interested in the following, unfolding example concerning three exotic antelope being ranched in Texas.

A number of Texas ranches were producing three exotic antelope species when these species were proposed for listing in 1991. During the listing process the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service responded to the ranchers request and crafted a rule to allow commercial culture which was adopted in 2005. As stated in the Federal Register rule notice:

We [USFWS] are amending 50 CFR § 17.21 by adding a new paragraph (h), which will apply to U.S. captive-bred scimitar-horned oryx, addax, and dama gazelle. The provision allows for the take; export or re-import; delivery, receipt, carrying, transport or shipment in interstate or foreign commerce, in the course of a commercial activity; or sale or offering for sale in interstate or foreign commerce of U.S. captive-bred live scimitar-horned oryx, addax, and dama gazelle, including embryos and gametes, and sport-hunted trophies, as long as certain criteria are met.

In 2009, the rule was successfully challenged in court and the Service was directed by the court to develop a rule in compliance with the ESA’s “take” prohibition. “Take” is defined in the Act as “to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or attempt to engage in any such conduct.”

During July 2011, the Service published a proposal to rescind their prior rule allowing commercialization. During October 2011, the Exotic Wildlife Association (<http://www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com/>) filed a suit with the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas (San Angelo Division) seeking to compel the Secretary of the Interior to act on a petition to remove three exotic antelope species from the endangered species list (as of this writing the suit is unresolved). On January 5, 2012, the Service published their final rule rescinding commercialization that will go into effect on April 4th. The final rule can be read here: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2012-01-05/pdf/2012-23.pdf>.

For a Q&A about the antelope, ESA, Service rules, and the impact of the court ruling, please see the January 4, 2012 news release from the Exotic Wildlife Association: http://www.exoticwildlifeassociation.com/pdf/01_0412/Three%20Species%20Final%20Rule%20Q&A%201-4-12.pdf. This release is well-worth reading as a real-world example of both the authority and lack of authority provided by the Endangered Species Act to federal agencies.

John Thiede
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
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The Alaska Department of Natural Resources, Division of Mining, Land, and Water would like to announce that the every-other-year aquatic farm application opening period for shellfish is being changed. It will now be held every year from January 1st through April 30th. All tide and submerged lands are open to commercial aquatic farming activities for shellfish. The opening is for the purpose of applying for a 10-year aquatic farm lease to culture pacific oysters, mussels, littleneck clams or geoduck clams and possibly other shellfish. The opening is also the time existing shellfish farmers can apply to amend their leases to request significant changes which require public notice, such as increasing the size of their farm site. The Department is hoping the yearly opening will provide more opportunities for establishing shellfish farms which in turn provide economic opportunity for rural Alaskan villages. Commercial shellfish farming is a clean, sustainable industry that, once established, adds additional protection to keep coastal waters free of contaminants and provides job opportunities to Alaskans where other opportunities have been lost.

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Wisconsin Regulatory Update
By Ron Johnson, Aquaculture Outreach Specialist

Fish Health Rules Changing

It has taken almost three years but the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) is in the final stages of revising the Administrative Code to simplify and reduce regulations concerning fish health in the state. Listening sessions facilitated by the Aquaculture Outreach Specialists allowed the industry to voice their concerns and make suggestions in a non-regulatory format which provided free flow of information in an informal setting. In December DATCP staff presented the final proposed rule changes to the industry at the Wisconsin Aquaculture Industry Advisory Council (WAIAC) meeting and held three formal hearings around the state.

There are over 18 changes to help simplify and better clarify the rules including several changes with import permits, exemptions for educational facilities, no longer requiring fish health certificates for farm to farm transfer of live fish within Wisconsin, and allows other states fish health certificates to be used. The Wisconsin Aquaculture Association (WAA) in a letter commenting on the rule changes said, "Overall the proposed changes are very positive: they reduce regulations where risks are minimal, give clarification where needed, and allow for owner controlled business decisions instead of mandated regulations". WAA in their letter to DATCP has also made six additional suggestions which will, "further clarify responsibilities, helping to assure better compliance and prevent potential problems with other agencies." The proposed rule changes are expected to be approved in the next couple of months.

Aquaculture Industry/DNR Working Group Reestablished

At the March 2011 WAA Annual Conference, DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp asked the industry what she could do to help with better communications with the department and the industry. The industry asked for reestablishment of the Aquaculture Working Group to address issues and find commonality in approaches to solve them. On September 8, 2011 the working group met in Madison represented by six aquaculture industry representatives, six DNR staffers and both aquaculture specialists. Agenda items included stocking permits, fisheries co-op agreements, WPDES aquaculture permits, and the Great Lakes Water Compact. There was lengthy discussion on each item, issues and concerns were outlined and general and specific outcomes were talked about. The department assigned staff to research and get back to the group with progress in those areas. At the December WAIAC meeting the department gave updates on progress of these issues including suspending the current WPDES permit application until the Wisconsin legislature has had time to review and make recommendations to the current program.

(Note from Ron) – I want to express my thanks to all NASAC members for the kind words of support and well wishes after my heart attack in October. I am doing much better, losing weight, eating better and excusing more – things I had put off. I regret not attending the ANSTF meeting in November but continue working on issues as they arise. Thanks – Ron

NASAC is Now on LinkedIn.

LinkedIn is the preferred professional social networking site. If you already have a LinkedIn profile, request to join NASAC. Creating an account takes a little time, but is a great way to stay in touch.

http://www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3128950&trk=myg_ugrp_ovr



Membership in NASAC is important. The stronger our association is the louder our voice will be heard when testifying or commenting on aquaculture issues. Membership form is included with this newsletter and available at http://www.nasac.net/Member_Application.pdf. Dues are good from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011. Questions concerning dues contact Joseph Myers, NJ Department of Agriculture, Fish and Seafood Development, PO Box 330, Trenton, NJ 08625, (609) 984-2502, (609) 633-7229 FAX, email joseph.myers@ag.state.nj.us.

**2010-2011 NASAC OFFICERS
AND BOARD MEMBERS**

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**DIRECTORY OF STATE AQUACULTURE
COORDINATORS**

As changes occur (**new hires, resignations, promotions, retirements**) please send the new information to Lynne Canter, nasac@nasac.net

It is very important to keep your state's information current. Without the correct email or address your State will not receive the quarterly newsletter or important information disseminated concerning aquaculture issues. You can get an up to date copy of the Directory of State Aquaculture Coordinators from the NASAC website: www.nasac.net

**To get an updated copy of the Aquaculture Coordinators and Contacts
go to the NASAC web site**

www.nasac.net and click on NASAC Directory

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
STATE AQUACULTURE COORDINATORS
(NASAC)
www.nasac.net

INVOICE/MEMBERSHIP FORM
DUES 2011/2012

(Please print or type)

NAME _____

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Address _____

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Type of Membership (check one)		Total
<input type="checkbox"/> Executive Member	\$100	_____
(State, Province, Territory Coordinators)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Member	\$ 50	_____
(Industry, Federal agencies, others)		

NASAC's Federal Employer Identification Number: 54-1589538

This application is also available as a fillable form at http://www.nasac.net/Member_Application.pdf.

Please remit annual membership dues for **fiscal year July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012**. Please remit payment by the end of the first quarter, September 30, 2011. MAKE CHECKS payable to NASAC and remit to:

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