



The Hon Katrina Hodgkinson MP
Minister for Primary Industries
Assistant Minister for Tourism and Major Events

MEDIA RELEASE

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AQUACULTURE IN NSW – MILLION DOLLAR BUSINESS

Minister for Primary Industries, Katrina Hodgkinson, today said the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is driving growth in the fastest-growing primary industry in Australia – aquaculture.

Ms Hodgkinson said the NSW Department of Primary Industries will highlight how it is driving research, unlocking new market opportunities and developing strategies for our aquaculture industry at World Aquaculture 2014, Conference and Tradeshow, which starts this weekend in Adelaide.

“We have a fast-growing \$50 million aquaculture industry in NSW which helps meet the increasing demands for quality, sustainable seafood,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“NSW produces a diverse range of home-grown aquaculture products including Sydney Rock Oysters and Blue Mussels in our estuaries and bays; prawns and Mulloway in earthen ponds on the north coast; trout in our alpine regions; and across our State native freshwater fish including Silver Perch, Barramundi, Yabbies and the iconic Murray Cod.

“This important industry underpins 1500 jobs in regional areas, with more than 142 land-based farms, 2300 hectares of current oyster leases and 30 estuaries approved for shellfish culture.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government is actively working with industry to ensure aquaculture develops in a sustainable manner, creates exciting new opportunities and provides the highest-quality seafood for consumers and export.

“I am proud to say DPI has pioneered farming of a number of species in this state, including Silver Perch, Yellowtail Kingfish, Mulloway, and pearl oysters.

“DPI is also leading by example in driving aquaculture opportunities by establishing a marine aquaculture research lease off Port Stephens to evaluate the potential of marine fish.”

Ms Hodgkinson said oyster farming is the most valuable aquaculture industry in NSW and the State has been producing oysters for more than 140 years.

“The NSW oyster industry has an annual production value of more than \$35 million and the industry acts as a ‘watch dog’ for the estuary, because they continually monitor water quality that indicates the health of the estuary,” Ms Hodgkinson said.

“The NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy has been updated to ensure the industry continues to thrive and be productive and sustainable.

“In terms of water usage, aquaculture is also an efficient use of fresh water as it can be used twice: once to grow the fish in, then used to grow other crops such as hydroponic vegetables, agro-forestry or pastures.

“Given the growing demand for seafood and the efficiency of aquaculture, it’s not hard to see why aquaculture is the fastest growing primary industry in Australia with annual growth of more than 12 per cent.”

Facts about aquaculture in NSW:

- \$50 million in aquaculture is produced in NSW annually;
- provides more than 1500 jobs in regional areas;
- 30 estuaries approved for shellfish culture;
- four estuaries with export approval for oysters;
- 315 oyster permit holders;
- 2300 hectares of current oyster leases; and
- 142 land-based farms.