



MEDIA RELEASE

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Ian Macdonald

Minister for Primary Industries, Minister for Energy,
Minister for Mineral Resources, Minister for State Development

NSW aquaculture continues to grow

Total production of NSW aquaculture has increased by almost 5 per cent to \$52 million, according to the latest yearly snapshot released by the Minister for Primary Industries Ian Macdonald today.

The NSW Government's Aquaculture Production report reveals the industry is continuing to prosper.

"The NSW aquaculture sector produces high quality seafood and provides employment and significant contributions to many regional communities," Mr Macdonald said.

"Aquaculture covers all farmed fish in NSW, including oysters, prawns, ornamental fish, silver perch, trout and yabbies.

"The value of the Sydney rock oyster industry rose by 4 per cent in the past year to \$36 million, this is our most valuable aquaculture industry."

Mr Macdonald said the report reveals the Hawkesbury River is well on the road to regaining its historical position as a major oyster producing estuary in NSW, following the devastating impact of QX oyster disease in 2004.

"The NSW Government is now leading the world in research into the breeding of oysters for disease resistance and fast growth," he said.

"The Hawkesbury River is now a cleaner, more sustainable and productive waterway, which reflects the hard work and dedication of our Hawkesbury farmers."

Mr Macdonald said the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy, a joint industry and government initiative, has also made inroads into raising the profile of the oyster industry and promoting initiatives to improve water quality in our estuaries.

"Drought has had an ongoing impact on freshwater aquaculture farms but despite this, production figures are still comparable to last financial year and the easing of the drought in some regions has resulted in a 48 per cent increase in hatchery production," he said.

"Prawn farming also increased in production by 8 per cent to \$3 million."

A NSW Hatchery Quality Assurance Program was also introduced this financial year for hatcheries producing native freshwater fish for waterway stocking.

This program is mandatory for hatcheries participating in stocking programs and is also used to accredit other hatcheries that comply with hatchery best management practices.

"I would like to thank everyone involved in the aquaculture industry, especially the farm operators for their ongoing hard work and cooperation," Mr Macdonald said.