



## NSW DPI Aquaculture Industry Update

### An information update for oyster aquaculture permit holders – March 2021

#### Commercialisation of the Sydney Rock Oyster breeding program

Shellfish Committee has undertaken a review of commercial activities supporting industry adoption of the Sydney Rock Oyster breeding program.

The outcome is that DPI will step in to support commercialisation of the outputs of the breeding program as well as manage the breeding of Sydney Rock Oyster families for the next three years.

DPI has agreed to fund the breeding runs and assessment components of this work for three years. Funding for the commercialisation aspects of the program is still being sought.

Shellfish Committee would like to acknowledge the support of the Select Oyster Company P/L (SOCo) and NSW Farmers Association since 2004 in this area. Shellfish Committee would also like to thank SOCo board members for their assistance as these new arrangements are transitioned to DPI.

Shellfish Committee believe that increased availability and uptake of improved stock by industry can be achieved by:

- retaining a Breeding Program Technical Committee
- establishing a Breeding Program Commercialisation Reference Group
- retaining an Industry Liaison Officer position
- linking with the NSW Oyster Industry Extension Officer.

#### Breeding Program Technical Committee

To provide advice on the future of the breeding program the existing Technical Committee will be retained and comprise of industry, the Industry Liaison Officer, DPI and CSIRO. DPI has met regularly with CSIRO this last year to deliver the current breeding goal established by industry (see Current Status of the Breeding Program section below). The Technical Committee may meet four times a year.

There is now a need to appoint, and fund, one or two industry representatives for the Technical Committee and fund a three year contract with CSIRO for provision of genetic services. Industry representatives will be sought through an Expression of Interest (EOI).

Breeding Program Commercialisation Reference Group

The role of the Reference Group is to inform the Technical Committee of industry needs and goals for the breeding program as well as focus on a business plan to commercialise outputs of the breeding program through reliable spat supply to industry.

This will include: advice on broodstock supply and conditioning requirements, spat production, spat supply, cost recovery, development and confirmation of short and long-term breeding objectives for the Technical Committee. The Reference Group will also explore future funding models for the breeding and commercialisation programs.

The Reference Group will be established by EOI with members of industry, Shellfish Committee, the Industry Liaison Officer and DPI. Terms of reference (TOR) will be drafted by the Reference Group for a three year tenure. The Reference Group will also held define the Industry Liaison Officer's role and expected milestones. It will report to Shellfish Committee.

Breeding Program Industry Liaison Officer

A dedicated position is required to actively market and support selected seed uptake within industry, manage commercial broodstock, manage industry liaison and support and implement Reference Group recommendations. The Officer would sit on both the Technical Committee and the Reference Group.

Current Status of the Breeding Program

The Sydney Rock Oyster breeding program is working towards delivering the breeding objective of 70% survival through a QX disease outbreak and 30% increase in growth without impacting meat condition. This involves an annual breeding run and approximately five progeny tests performed in Port Stephens and Georges River to collect QX survival, growth and condition data. Additional performance tests are undertaken in other estuaries.

Winter mortality disease survival is a trait under evaluation for inclusion in the breeding program. However, low levels of winter mortality disease expression in Georges River has made this difficult to date.

Genetic advice and direction for the program is provided by CSIRO which includes a streamlined data management system. A new feature of the data management system is an online breeding cross calculator for hatcheries/industry to access performance data for commercial families and also calculate the QX survival, growth and meat condition breeding values of different family matings.

The 2020 year class has been produced at the newly refurbished PSFI Hatchery.

For further details contact Rachel Kerma  
Email: [rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au) Phone: 02 4916 3901.

## EOIs

Class A Aquaculture Permit holders are invited to apply for the following positions:

EOI for the **Breeding Program Technical Committee** - one to two industry representatives. Face to face meeting travel expense would be covered, there are no sitting fees.

EOI for the **Breeding Program Commercialisation Reference Group** – up to ten industry representatives. Meetings would be undertaken remotely, there are no sitting fees.

Class A Aquaculture Permit holders or other parties are invited to apply for the following position:

EOI for an **Industry Liaison Officer** position – one representative. For details of the proposed Industry Liaison Officer position please contact Rachel Kerma DPI [rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

Please send EOIs to Rachel Kerma [rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rachel.kerma@dpi.nsw.gov.au) (no more than two pages) by 12 April 2021.

### Additional Information

DPI will host an online meeting with shellfish hatcheries to discuss the changes put forward above.

The updated NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy (fourth edition) will be placed on public consultation in May. COVID-19 dependent, DPI are planning to host meetings at Merimbula, Batemans Bay, Port Stephens, Port Macquarie and Ballina in May.

Industry consultation of floating basket and raft best practice guidelines will also occur in May 2021.

### More Information:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/aquaculture>  
or contact [aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:aquaculture.administration@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

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