

## Helping Investors Make Well-Informed Shellfish Farming Decisions

New York Sea Grant (NYSG) has a successful track record developing educational resources to assist stakeholders interested in marine-related economic development opportunities. Most recently, NYSG created resources to enable investors to make better business decisions about starting a shellfish farming enterprise.

Shellfish farming is one of the few options available for individuals to establish a marine business in New York. This opportunity is primarily sustained through the Suffolk County Aquaculture Lease Program (SCALP). With its high approval rate, modest fees, and few eligibility criteria, SCALP is an enticing option to investors.

Since its inception in 2009, SCALP has taken action to repossess latent property parcels because owners were not fully prepared to deal with the regulatory and operational requirements involved with establishing a shellfish farm. Evidently, SCALP investors can benefit from a centralized resource to make decisions about launching a shellfish farming business.



### Starting A New Business

NYSG and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County worked with the shellfish licensing authorities to develop a course for applicants to learn about the regulatory and operating policies used to manage shellfish farms.

This course describes:

- Programs to lease state, county and town underwater lands;
- Licenses used for shellfish culture, movement, harvesting and distribution;
- Procedures to ensure safety for public consumption; and
- Managing and preventing disease in shellfish livestock.



*Shellfish farmers need to be aware of the policies and regulations that are used to manage the industry Photo: NYSG*

This NYSG new business start-up course empowers investors considering SCALP and other access programs to make better business decisions, which will ultimately lead to a measurable decline in latent leases in Suffolk County. Additionally, the course will be used as a template to educate investors and shellfish growers in other regions of the U.S. This course will be beta tested with 35 shellfish investors who have applied for the 2018 SCALP cycle.

#### Partners:

- Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County: Suffolk County Marine Program
- NYS Department of Environmental Conservation
- Suffolk County Planning Department
- School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences Marine Animal Disease Laboratory, Stony Brook University

#### ***The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is NY Sustainable Fisheries & Aquaculture***

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

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