
5th NATIONAL AQUACULTURE EXTENSION WORKSHOP/CONFERENCE¹

Project *Termination Report* for the Period
September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011

NCRAC FUNDING LEVEL: \$5,000 (September 1, 2010 to August 31, 2011)

PARTICIPANTS:

Jimmy Avery	Mississippi State University	Mississippi
<i>National Steering Committee:</i>		
Ron Blair	University of Tennessee Extension	Tennessee
Gef Flimlin	Rutgers Cooperative Extension	New Jersey
Gary Fornshell	University of Idaho Extension	Idaho
David Heikes	University of Arkansas Pine Bluff	Arkansas
Gary Jensen	USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)	Washington, D.C.
Gene Kim	NOAA National Sea Grant	Maryland
Ron Kinnunen	Michigan State University	Michigan
Max Mayeaux	USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)	Washington, D.C.
Paul Olin	University of California-San Diego	California
Robert Romaine	Louisiana State University	Louisiana
Tetsuzan Benny Ron	University of Hawaii	Hawaii
Jeff Silverstein	USDA Agricultural Research Service	Washington, D.C.
Nathan Stone	University of Arkansas Pine Bluff	Arkansas
Laura Tiu	Ohio State University	Ohio
Craig Tucker	Mississippi State University	Mississippi
Marc Turano	North Carolina State University	North Carolina
Forrest Wynne	Kentucky State University	Kentucky

REASON FOR TERMINATION

The project objectives were completed.

(2) Demonstrate and conduct hands-on experience with state-of-the-art computer applications for improving delivery of extension programs.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

(1) Learn successful approaches to problem-solving through case studies that can be replicated in other states, i.e., lessons learned.

¹NCRAC has provided funding along with the four other Regional Aquaculture Centers for five national aquaculture extension meetings; the first was called a National Aquaculture Extension Workshop whereas the second through fifth were called National Aquaculture Extension Conferences. This termination report is for the fifth meeting which was held June 5-7, 2011 in Memphis, Tennessee.

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- (3) Identify national extension priorities and critical issues with development of corresponding action plans for implementation.
- (4) Identify potential interregional extension projects, such as curriculum development or national decision support databases.
- (5) Share educational materials and programs in addition to expertise.
- (6) Strengthen regional and national communication networks to improve services to clientele.
- (7) Examine successful extension components and outcomes to research projects and develop approaches to improve integration nationwide.
- (8) Develop a collective strategy to define extension's role in measuring impacts of Regional Aquaculture Center (RAC) projects and collaboration with others in academia and private sector.
- (9) Improve business management skills related to aquaculture and enhance knowledge concerning marketing of aquatic products.

PRINCIPAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The 5th National Aquaculture Extension Conference was held June 5-7, 2011 in Memphis, Tennessee and built upon the previous conferences held in March 1992 in Little Rock, Arkansas; April 1997 in Annapolis, Maryland; April 2003 in Tucson, Arizona; and April 2007 in Cincinnati, Ohio. This conference is the only opportunity for extension aquaculture professionals nationwide to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate a professional growth and

enhancement program that aims to improve personal performance and effectiveness. As programs undergo scrutiny and downsizing, and seeing as how extension capabilities in aquaculture vary across the nation, investment in human capital is of enormous benefit. As more university faculty are asked to address multiple responsibilities of extension, teaching, and research functions, effectiveness becomes increasingly important.

The conference provided participants new contacts, knowledge about new topics, information about new tools to enhance productivity, appreciation of experience and perspectives on issues, a chance to replicate model programs, gain in expanding professional networks, opportunities to contribute to the development of others, insights into participating in regional and national initiatives, and growth in skills development relevant to responsibilities. The conference provided a forum for professionals from the Sea Grant Marine Advisory Service, the Cooperative Extension Service, and other outreach programs to seek collaboration for mutual benefit to the aquaculture industry and the public.

Despite the tough economic times at universities, the conference had an excellent turnout. There were 108 participants representing 38 states, the District of Columbia, and Micronesia. Participants represented both Land Grant universities as well as NOAA Sea Grant programs from across the United States.

Given the shortened agenda compared to previous conferences, this was a very efficient conference in terms of shared information. There were 49 oral

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presentations by speakers and panel members as well as 34 poster presentations.

Roger Barlow, President of The Catfish Institute and Executive V.P. of Catfish Farmers of America, gave a presentation on the recent challenges to the U.S. farm-raised catfish industry. Robert Rheault, East Coast Shellfish Growers Association, made a presentation on the value of growers associations and how Extension can assist in their formation.

Meryl Broussard, Deputy Director, Agriculture and Natural Resources, USDA NIFA, and Gary Jensen, National Program Leader for Aquaculture, USDA NIFA, spoke about opportunities, trends, and the future outlook for Extension. Michael Rice, NOAA Aquaculture Science Coordinator, and Gene Kim, NOAA Aquaculture National Program Leader, discussed coordination and Sea Grant Extension programming.

Additional plenary themes on Day 1 included Extension partnerships with federal research laboratories, trends and outlook for Extension participation in the Regional Aquaculture Centers, the increasing role of Extension in federal programs targeting aquaculture, and Extension's role in combating misconceptions about aquaculture.

The freshwater concurrent session on Day 2 focused on aquatic plants, economic tools for struggling producers, emerging technologies for finfish production, and an introduction to eXtension and Aquaculture Communities of Practice. The marine concurrent session included discussions on case studies in marine Extension, Extension's role in expanding markets for aquaculture products, legal issues and informational resources, input into Sea

Grant aquaculture research, and a review of new aquaculture Extension projects.

Professional development took center stage in Day 2's plenary sessions with discussions on promotion and tenure issues and the use of communication and information technology tools. The conference wrapped up with a panel of Extension specialists discussing case studies of economic development.

Resource Sharing

Conference planners were vitally interested in each participant having the opportunity to share information concerning successful programs and projects. Due to the limited number of oral presentation slots, conference participants were encouraged to submit a poster presentation. Each speaker and poster presenter was required to provide an extended abstract for the conference proceedings. All participants were asked to bring resource materials that were not available over the internet. Tables were provided in the meeting area for participants to display these materials. The extended abstracts, attendees contact information, and resource materials (newsletters, production manuals, promotional pieces, and program descriptions) were provided on electronic media devices.

Evaluation

A post-conference questionnaire was used to collect input from participants to identify strengths and weaknesses and to solicit ideas to improve planning for subsequent conferences. Respondents were asked to rate the usefulness of sessions on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being low and 5 being highly useful. Additional question required only "Yes" or "No" responses.

Value

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In order to reduce travel costs, this year's conference was shortened from 4 days to 2 days. When asked to rate the benefits of the program considering time/travel cost, 80% of respondents ranked it as moderately high (4) to high (5). When asked to rate the overall value, 75% ranked it as moderately high (4) to high (5). Concerning future conferences, 89% indicated that they would attend future conferences and 96% indicated that they would recommend other Extension personnel to attend.

Benefit to Participants

Due to shrinking state and federal budgets, there has been increasing emphasis by funding agencies for conference participants to show increased knowledge concerning funding opportunities or direct benefits to clientele resulting from conferences of this type. However, participants indicated that establishing contacts was still a very important benefit of this conference. When asked what they gained from the program, the number one response (97%) was "Names of other people to contact." The number two response (65%) dealt with "Resource materials to use." Additional stated benefits included:

- Link to National Law Library
- New communication strategies
- Information on aquatic herbicides
- Collaboration opportunities
- Insight into funding problems at USDA

Benefit to Clientele

When asked about the benefits to clientele directly related to attendance of this (and past) conference(s), the top two responses were (1) "able to use new contacts to help solve local problems" and (2) "gained awareness of information resources

available from others." Additional stated benefits included:

- Being able to help farmers access new tools and information
- New approaches to problem solving
- Knowledge of the economic tools provided
- Increased knowledge of funding opportunities that can benefit producers

IMPACTS

- There were 108 participants representing 38 states, the District of Columbia, and Micronesia. Participants represented both Land Grant universities as well as NOAA Sea Grant programs from across the United States.
- The top three responses to what was gained from the conference were (1) contacts, (2) resource materials, and (3) a better understanding of Regional Aquaculture Center and Sea Grant programs.
- Concerning future conferences, 89% indicated that they would attend future conferences and 96% indicated that they would recommend other Extension personnel to attend.

RECOMMENDED FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Attendees will be sent a post-conference. The location for the next conference has not yet been determined.

PUBLICATIONS, MANUSCRIPTS, OR PAPERS PRESENTED

See the Appendix for a cumulative output for all NCRAC-funded National Aquaculture Extension Workshops/Conferences.

SUPPORT

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YEARS	NCRAC- USDA FUNDING	OTHER SUPPORT					TOTAL SUPPORT
		UNIVER- SITY	INDUSTRY	OTHER FEDERAL ^a	OTHER	TOTAL	
2010-11	\$5,000			\$6,500		\$11,500	\$11,500
TOTAL	\$5,000			\$6,500		\$11,500	\$11,500

Southern Regional Aquaculture Center contributed \$5,000 and Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture contributed \$1,500. Individual travel grants were supported by several RACs and the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program.