



New York State Aquaculture Association

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A New Year Means New Decisions

One of the perennial good things about the aquaculture business is the renewal we all feel with the coming of spring. There is something exhilarating about getting out doors on those first warm days and sprucing up the landscape or looking for those first signs that life is immersing in our ponds and fish have made it through another winter season. Last year seems like a distant memory as we look forward to a new year's worth of challenges. The commentators on the evening news have painted a rather dismal picture of the economy and if you've been laid off from your job, optimism may be difficult to muster. We must all continue on however, and the dawning of a new day offers hope, dreams and opportunity to those who make things happen through their own hard work and creativity.

This year many of us are faced with business decisions that will determine whether we're open for business or not in 2009. Fish health inspections are forcing many, including myself, to re-evaluate the type of business we will be running this year. Gambling several thousand dollars on fish health inspection expenses may not inspire confidence that those funds will return in higher sales. In fact, several of our colleagues have paid for fish health inspections this year, only to find the results coming back positive for several diseases and forcing them to shut down important segments of their businesses until the problems can be resolved. For them, the gamble was real and they financed a venture that curtailed the stocking element of their business in New York State. If you have your fish tested this year and the results come back positive, please call or e-mail me immediately. We are here to advise you regarding your options and help plan a productive response to your situation. You will not have to stand alone in your time of crisis; we are here to help.

As growers, we need to be ready to diversify our businesses at a moments notice in order to survive. What are some of our options for doing business in New York in the coming year? If selling stocking fish becomes impractical due to high health inspection costs or some other factor, there are still several alternatives you can implement and still sell your uncertified fish products legally. Fish that are uncertified, those that have not been health inspected or failed a health inspection, can be legally sold on the food

fish market. The method of sale and clientele buying the fish will need to be specifically identified and targeted, but business can be transacted legally. Growers can sell trout, black bass, blue gills, yellow perch and many other fish species directly from their hatchery to an end user. If you're running your own farm market or set up at a public market or flea market, you can sell your uncertified fish legally to customers to take home for dinner. The fish would need to be killed (one could cut the flesh between the gills) at the time of sale, for live sales would come under stocking regulations and be illegal. You can not however, sell black bass, walleye or salmon to restaurants, supermarkets, fish markets or other third party vendors who would then sell to retail customers. That process is currently illegal in New York State. Your association is working to get those outmoded regulation changed, so third party sales become legalized.

Some growers have indicated that they intend to purchase certified fish from other growers and re-sell them to their local customers. Purchasing certified fish from other New York State growers would, I'm sure, be appreciated by those growers and keep business within our state. Moving certified fish throughout the state is no problem and requires only a bill of sale and a copy of that grower's fish health certificate. If you intend to purchase fish from out-of-state sources to stock into New York State waters, regulations will need to be followed to keep the process legal and above board. Here are a few things to keep in mind:

1. If you are going to purchase fish from out of state and will be picking up your own health certified fish from an out of state supplier, you may do so without obtaining a fish import permit from DEC. The bill of sale and the fish health certificate accompanying the fish are sufficient.
2. If your out-of-state fish supplier will be delivering his fish to you, he needs to contact Phil Hulbert at the Bureau of Fisheries in Albany and obtain a fish import permit. The permits are free and will enable the DEC to identify your imported fish as being legally obtained for import into the state. You can contact Phil at this telephone number: 518-402-8890 or by e-mail at: pxhulber@gw.dec.state.ny.us , for more information about the fish import permit and procedure.
3. When purchasing fish for resale, be sure they come with the required fish health certification and comply with the new regulations that went into effect January 1, 2009. Specifically, regulations require that trout (salmonids) be certified free of all 8 of these diseases: IHN, IPN, SVC, VHS, WD, BF, BKD, and ERM. Non-salmonids, fish that are not of the trout family, need to be certified free of all 5 of these diseases: VHS, BF, ERM, IPN and SVC. All these diseases are written out in longhand on last year's fish health certificate that Dr. Andy Noyes provided growers when he inspected your fish in 2007, as well as the DEC sample fish health certificate below. Regulations require that health inspection results be reported on forms approved by the DEC. A copy of this report form is available on the DEC website. By clicking on the following link you can view a copy of this form:
http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/fish_marine_pdf/fishhealthcertificate.pdf

4. In terms of having certified fish and uncertified fish in the same facility, growers need to consult with DEC officials for a ruling. Generally speaking, the uncertified fish in your facility will negate the health certificate of newly purchased certified fish causing all to be considered uncertified. Specific situations and question should be directed to DEC officials prior to bringing these two types of fish together. Growers should contact Dr. Andy Noyes at the Rome Lab (315-337-0910) to discuss their particular situation. Growers must be very cautious before risking the loss of a fish health certificate!!!!

5. Bait fish are an important commodity throughout the state and are sold just about everywhere one can fish. They are also the carriers of many different types of fish diseases and are highly regulated. Recently bait farmers/dealers received a letter from the DEC outlining regulations governing the sale of bait fish. I have attached that letter to this newsletter for your information.

Federal regulations require that fish can not be sold for stocking purposes in neighboring states unless they are certified free of VHS virus. Some states require other disease certifications as well. Growers should check the USDA, APHIS website described in the next article and the state to which the fish will be exported (which is also on the USDA APHIS website), prior to shipping fish across state lines.

In the coming weeks I will describe other activities growers may choose to implement regarding the sale of uncertified fish and fish products. If you have any ideas that could help a fellow association member diversify their business, please e-mail them to me for inclusion into the next newsletter.

USDA APHIS CREATED NEW FISH HEALTH WEBSITE

The following was taken from a USDA news release:

AMES, Iowa - Viral hemorrhagic septicemia (VHS), a serious and often fatal disease of fresh and marine fish species, has been found in the Great Lakes region of the U.S. and Canada. As part of a national outreach campaign to educate the public about VHS, a new Web site – www.FocusOnFishHealth.org – has been launched. The campaign and Web site are funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS) and was a collaborative effort of fisheries and aquaculture stakeholders from industry, universities, state and federal agencies and national organizations.

The Web site is designed to help boaters, anglers, aquaculture producers, and bait fish dealers learn more about the serious nature of VHS and it encourages them to take measures that will slow or prevent the spread of the disease. VHS has caused die-offs in recreational and sport fish species like muskellunge, smallmouth bass, and yellow perch as well as a number of baitfish. Fish can become infected from the urine or reproductive fluids of infected fish, or by eating infected fish. The virus spreads to new locations primarily by the movement of infected fish or water.

While VHS has not been found in aquaculture facilities in the United States, the virus can affect commercially farmed species, so biosecurity and prevention resources for aquaculture producers are included on the Web site. The FocusOnFishHealth.org Website also serves as a clearinghouse for VHS resources. Extension specialists, educators and researchers can view the resources developed by their colleagues and download the latest information about VHS. Visitors can submit their resources to the site. "This Web site helps the public and individuals involved in recreation and aquaculture to understand that the simple precautions they take can

help prevent the spread of this serious disease,” said Dr. Gary Egrie, APHIS Senior Staff Veterinary Medical Officer, Aquaculture Program. In the future, based on stakeholder input and support, as well as available funding, we envision that the site could offer information on other aspects of fish health.

The Web site was developed by the [Center for Food Security and Public Health](#) at the Iowa State University College of Veterinary Medicine. The CFSPH has an award winning Web site.

I have visited this website and found that it was very well done and contained much valuable information. This site should be one of your first choices when looking for any type of fish health information. The site contains material regarding fish import regulations for every state in the union, federal regulations governing fish shipments and fish health certification. A chart chronicles the spread of VHS from its beginnings to present and will be updated as new material is discovered. There is a chart that answers the question; “Where are all the dead fish?” and lists all reported VHS fish kills nationwide. Fish farm biosecurity is also addressed along with much more. Once on the site, you could spend days reading the various reports, charts and other information. USDA intends to maintain the site regularly and keep the information current. On a scale of 1 to 10, I rate this site a 10 and encourage you to visit it.

Association Support for the Coming Year

One year has elapsed since the restructuring of our association. As part of the restructuring agreement, it was decided that no dues or fees would be charged to any members for all of 2008 (one year) and that the residual funds in the association’s accounts would be used to conduct association business during that time. This was a good idea and it gave us a chance to reorganize and the membership an opportunity to experience what the restructuring would do for them. In the December issue of NYSAquaNews, the lead article outlined accomplishments your association has made during 2008. Important channels of support and communication have been established with legislative leaders, government departments and cutting edge aquaculture researchers nation wide. More of course, still needs to be done to grow the industry in its many forms and locations across the state.

Since we are a not-for-profit organization, all of your association’s officers are volunteers and receive no salary for their work. In fact, each has paid his own way to events and meetings without reimbursement for costs. Operating expenses however, are another matter. Printer cartridges at \$15 each, copy work costs, postage, paper, folders and the like need to be paid for in cash. I’m sure everyone in business knows what I mean. Finances have also minimized our ability to use technology, conduct workshops and help grow the industry across the state.

There is nothing I’d like to do more than run our association as a public service and not ask members for dues. These difficult economic times make dues an even more distressing topic of discussion. Unfortunately, your association is not under the care of any philanthropic benefactors or organizations. Support must come from the membership.

At an executive council meeting held on Feb 6, 2009, the subject of association finance was discussed along with the establishment of a membership dues schedule. Here is a summary of that discussion.

1. The NYSAquaNews newsletter will be used to help raise money for the association. New sections devoted to advertising will be developed in an effort to increase revenue. Aquaculture equipment, feed, sporting goods, and other companies will be contacted and encouraged to run ads in our newsletter and post links to their websites. These companies would be considered part of the association's corporate membership.
2. A classified ad section will be developed so members and non-members can run ads for the sale of fish, equipment, services, plants or other products they might produce. Ads would be 25 words or less in length and cost \$5. The ad would run in one newsletter edition, but could be renewed for an additional \$5 per edition. No website links would be allowed in the classified ads.
3. A want ad section will be developed for members and non-members to advertise for fish, equipment, services or other materials they would like to buy. Ads would be 25 words or less in length and cost \$5. The ad would run in one newsletter edition, but could be renewed for an additional \$5 per edition. No website links would be allowed in the want ads.
4. A display ad section would be created in the NYSAquaNews newsletter. Each ad would measure 2.5" X 1.5" and be designed by the subscriber. Advertising and/or a link to their website could be listed. Ads would be published in the NYSAquaNews newsletter and cost \$50 per edition. Subscriber could pay for as many editions of the newsletter as he/she wanted upon submission of the display ad.
5. The following membership schedule will be offered so people from varying backgrounds may participate in the aquaculture association experience. Membership categories are listed below and cover a one year membership starting January 1 and ending December 31 of each year. People joining during the year will be charged the annual rate for the balance of any given year or a special reduced rate at the discretion of the association president.

Grower	\$50
Educator/Researcher	\$40
Government	
Associate	\$30
Student	\$10
Corporate	\$250
Sponsor	\$200

What you get for each of these membership categories:

Every member would receive the NYSAquaNews newsletter published periodically and sent to members electronically (e-mail), any news bulletins of interest, excellent camaraderie and an executive council and officers dedicated to the advancement of the

aquaculture industry in New York State. Specific membership categories would also receive these benefits:

Grower: Growers or producers engaged in the operation of an aquaculture facility or business would receive these additional benefits: Free admission to association workshops, 5 free classified ads or want ads in the association newsletter per year, one vote in any association elections and customer referrals from people wanting to purchase specific aquaculture products or services. Non-legal, non-binding advice, consultation and referral information would also be offered regarding issues affecting their business.

Educator/Researcher/Government: For people involved in education, research or government service relating to the aquaculture industry, these additional benefits apply: Free admission to association workshops, 5 free classified ads or want ads in the association newsletter per year, one aquaculture related submission of a book, pamphlet or other publication review, submitted by the author, and published in the association newsletter during that membership year. The review would be limited to approximately 600 words or less in length and contain no pictures. One unpaid visiting scholar placement on a working fish farm for one day per year (offer contingent upon grower availability; agreement on conditions of placement and other details to be announced)

Associate: For people who are not in the aquaculture industry, but want to support the association and its work. They would have an opportunity to discuss aquaculture related topics by phone, offered referral to topic related websites and links and notified of upcoming association workshops of interest.

Student: For any person enrolled or anticipating enrollment in an educational institution for the study of aquaculture. They would receive electronic notification of association workshops and events, an opportunity to participate in an unpaid field experience on selected fish farms in N.Y.S.; details to be worked out between the Association, cooperating grower and student. (Offer contingent upon grower availability; agreement on conditions of placement and other details to be announced).

Corporate: Is available to businesses and organizations involved in or supporting the aquaculture industry. Benefits include: The registering of up to 3 officers or employees as growers, One 2.5" wide X 1.5" high ad, designed by the corporate member, would appear in each edition of the NYSAquaNews newsletter published that year (minimum of 3 newsletters per year). The ad could include advertising and/or a link to their website. Portable 3 FT. X 3 Ft. light weight advertising signage designed by the corporate member to be displayed at any association sponsored workshops or public events. The member's products, equipment or service would be mentioned during association workshops or public events as deemed appropriate by the association.

Sponsor: Is available to businesses or organizations supporting the aquaculture industry. Benefits include: One 2.5" wide X 1.5" high display ad, designed by the corporate member, would appear in each edition of the NYSAquaNews newsletter published that year (minimum of 3 newsletters per year). The ad could include advertising and/or a link to their website. Portable 3 FT. X 3 Ft. light weight advertising signage designed by the corporate member to be displayed at any association sponsored workshops or public events. The member's products, equipment or service

would be mentioned during association workshops or public events as deemed appropriate by the association.

Please Note: All communications with membership will be done electronically via e-mail. Members without e-mail should ask a friend with e-mail for permission to use their address for communications. If this is not possible, please **add \$20** to every category above to cover the postage and handling costs of U.S. Postal Service delivery.

Since these innovations are new for the association, some modifications may need to be made as we implement the various opportunities. The association reserves the right to change, modify or withdraw any or all of the above opportunities without stating cause at any time and without prior notification.

Those wishing to join the Association or renew their membership should complete the membership form at the end of this newsletter and send it, along with your check or money order, to association headquarters. The new form is necessary because of new information their in.

Spring Calendar of Events

On March 12, 2009 the first of this year's Intersector meetings will be held at SUNY Morrisville, Morrisville, N.Y. The meeting will be held in President's room, Charlton Hall, from 11:00 AM to no later than 3:00 PM. The following website shows a map of the Morrisville campus: <http://www.morrisville.edu/maps/>. Lunch will be available at individual's expense. If you plan to attend the meeting, please select your lunch choice from the attached menu and RSVP Assistant Professor Laurie Trotta at trottala@morrisville.edu. as soon as you can. The agenda is always open forum in design. All association members and guests are welcome.

On April 8, 2009 a biosecurity workshop will be held at Hicklings Fish Farm in Edmeston, New York. The workshop will be organized and sponsored by the NYS DEC, NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets, Microtechnologies of Maine, Hickling's Fish Farm and your Association. The workshop will be free to anyone attending. Hickling's will offer a tour of their facilities and a free light lunch to participants. A specific agenda, registration information and directions to Hickling's Fish Farm will be e-mailed to association members in mid-March.

As always, your friend in aquaculture;

Ted Universal
President



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Membership Application

(Please print or type) **New Membership** _____ **Renewal Membership** _____

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Date: _____

Company/Institution _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

County of _____ NYS Senate Dist. _____ NYS Assembly Dist. _____
(If Known) (If Known)

E-mail Address (Important for future communications) _____

Phone No. _____ Fax No. _____ Cellphone No. _____

Dues are for one year: Grower \$50 _____ Educator/Researcher/Government \$40 _____
(January 1 to December 31)

Student \$10 _____ Associate \$30 _____ Corporate \$250 _____ Sponsor \$200 _____

Makes checks payable to: N.Y.S. Aquaculture Association

Those without e-mail, please add \$20 to cover the postage & handling costs of USPS delivery.

List the Species of Fish or other aquatic life you culture:

What issues do you feel this organization should address? Comments: (Use back or other pages if needed)

