MISSISSIPPI-ALABAMA SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

Sea Grant

February 2018

The Mississippi-Alabama (MS-AL) Sea Grant Consortium is one of 33 Sea Grant college programs and is a collaborative program between several Mississippi and Alabama universities.

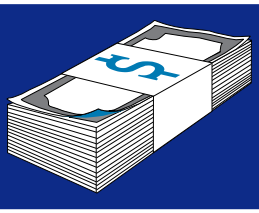
Alabama oyster farmers experiment with off-bottom oyster farming to produce high-quality oysters for the marketplace. Credit: MS-AL Sea Grant

MS-AL Sea Grant integrated program expands Alabama's oyster farming industry

MS-AL Sea Grant-funded scientists, extension staff and legal staff created an integrated program utilizing research and outreach expertise on production methods and best management practices, aiding the expansion of the oyster farming industry in Alabama. Based on a situation and outlook survey of oyster farms in 2016, nine of 13 permitted farms reported more than 2.8 million oysters produced on 18.1 acres, with total annual sales of almost $2 million.

masgc.org

$3.2 M
Economic benefit



34,000
K-12 students reached

1,000
Jobs created or sustained

Metrics reported to National Sea Grant Office in June 2017 for work completed February 2016 to January 2017

RESEARCH EXTENSION EDUCATION

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MS-AL Sea Grant volunteers restore oyster reef habitat valued at $55,000

Oysters are bundled into mesh bags before being placed in the water for reef restoration.
Credit: MS-AL Sea Grant

MS-AL Sea Grant coordinates the Mobile Bay Oyster Gardening Program in Alabama, a volunteer-based project that focuses on education, restoration and research by bringing the reef to the people. In 2016, volunteers restored up to 2.89 acres of oyster reef habitat with an economic value of $55,000. A restored oyster reef provides critical habitat for popular recreational fish species, as well as tremendous filtration potential to improve water quality. The oyster gardening program restoration efforts within Mobile Bay have restocked nearly 36.5 acres since its inception.

oystergardening.org

"Growing oysters acquaints you much more intimately to the many threats and hopefully, more informed and invested voices will lead to policies that will improve water quality that will benefit the bay and all stakeholders."
- Andy DePaola, retired seafood microbiologist (US Food and Drug Administration) and oyster grower

Enhancing Environmental Literacy for K-12 Students

MS-AL Sea Grant supports three environmental centers that provide place-based educational opportunities for K-12 students. In 2016, a total of 16,467 students actively engaged in field-based education programs. The programs increase student understanding of how coastal sciences and research enhance quality of life, promote sustainability and inform coastal resource management decisions.

Improving Fish Feed Quality

Taurine is a nutrient required in the diet of many fish species, but is not naturally produced by plants. MS-AL Sea Grant research explored the efficacy and safety of crystalline taurine used in plant-based fish feed. In 2017, the FDA and the Association of American Feed Control Officials approved the use of crystalline taurine which was found to be a safe and more sustainable product than fishmeal.

Informing Sustainable Shoreline Construction

MS-AL Sea Grant's living shorelines program seeks out and evaluates alternatives to hardened shorelines for environmental and economic benefits. In 2016, MS-AL extension agents informed decision makers on the protection, restoration or enhancement of more than three linear miles of shoreline and saved two landowners over $40,000 in construction costs.