



# NEWSLETTER

## Aboriginal Aquaculture Association

June 2018

[www.aboriginalaquaculture.com](http://www.aboriginalaquaculture.com)

## AAA & AAROM 2018

### Continued Support for Aboriginal Aquaculture Development

These last five years have seen the AAA's Aquaculture Business & Technical Experts (ABTE's) work closely with First Nations supporting their existing aquaculture enterprises and assisting them with new aquaculture initiatives under the Aboriginal Aquaculture in Canada Initiative (AACI) which came to an end this last March 2018.

Much success was realized through the program by the many projects that were financially supported during the program's term; several Aboriginal aquaculture businesses were able to expand their shellfish farming operations thanks in part to AACI funding, two First Nations benefitted from proof of concept projects helping them identify and invest in crawfish and scallop farming opportunities in their territory, several First Nations were supported in identifying geoduck aquaculture potential, other AACI recipients were able to assess shellfish inventories on their tenures and create sound management plans for seeding and establishing sustainable harvest rates, a First Nation business was funded to research and implement innovative technology that could impact the processing and safe consumption of raw

shellfish, several First Nations also benefitted from partnership development as a result of AACI funded projects and all of the projects successfully funded by the AACI program resulted in either new jobs created or "animals-in-the-water" and more often than not, both. These tangible results will create long term sustainable wealth and employment for First Nations and Aboriginal entrepreneurs helping to improve the socio-economic well-being of many remote communities and people.

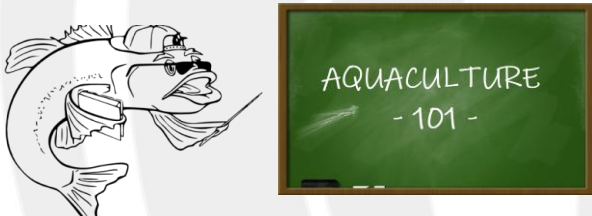
Building on this success Fisheries and Oceans Canada, through AAROM, has committed to continue supporting the AAA in the very important work of providing expertise and advice to First Nations and Aboriginal entrepreneurs of British Columbia in economic development in the aquaculture sector.



## Services Offered by AAA

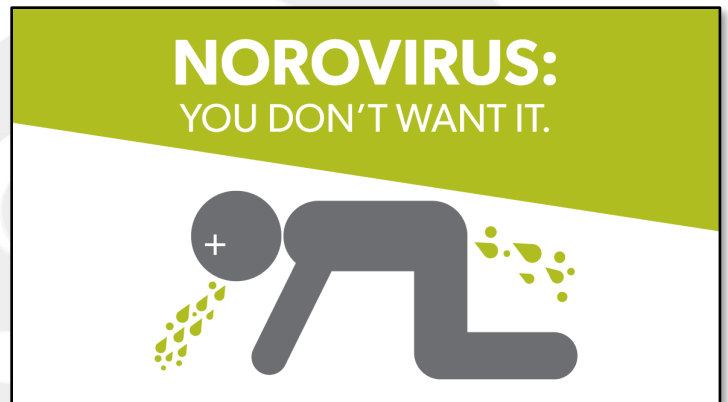
Services offered in 2018-19 by the AAA will include; technical support for aquaculture development, assistance with in-the-field work, expertise provided for tenure siting, grow-out gear installation, maintenance and operations training, as well as seeding & harvesting processes, expanded production for shellfish, finfish, crustaceans, marine plants in saltwater or freshwater. The AAA will also assist Aboriginal aquaculture businesses with applying for new tenures, amending species or management plans on existing tenures, provide support in maintaining COLs (Conditions of License), AASR reporting and assist with navigating the Federal & Provincial regulatory landscape for all aquaculture rules and regulations for all species.

The AAA will also develop educational materials for delivery to grade 3 and 10 students across the Province. Aboriginal youth will learn more about aquaculture, where and how it is practiced and about potential career opportunities.



**Aquaculture Workshops** in key areas throughout the Province will be developed and delivered with the goal of assisting Aboriginal Communities & organizations in better understanding aquaculture including the identifying of opportunities, creating social license, learning of the various approaches to farming aquatic species in the water and on-land and building capacity and knowledge to better grasp the “ups & downs” in pursuing aquaculture development and the future it holds for sustainable production of seafood.

## \*Norovirus 2018 Update\*



### A Water Quality Problem Impacts Shellfish Farming

The grave issue of Norovirus outbreaks was once again dominating the BC shellfish news in early 2018 with impacting consequences to the Industry’s reputation for outstanding farmed shellfish quality and causing financial hardship to operators affected by area closures. Over 170 people reported illnesses after eating raw BC oysters affected with Norovirus this past March, April and May and, it is believed that the herring fleet may be implicated in the latest outbreak. The shellfish industry lost millions in sales revenues and many operators were forced to lay off many of their workers. Several First Nation oyster growers were also affected by these closures.

The AAA, the BC Shellfish Growers Association and Industry stakeholders engaged in extensive discussions with Government to find a way to mitigate future Norovirus events. It is important to remember that Norovirus is not an “oyster” problem but rather a water quality issue; oysters are simply the canary in the coal mine and an early warning signal to greater problems with how we manage waste water (sewage) discharge into Baynes Sound and the Gulf.

## BREAKING NEWS

The BC Minister of Agriculture, Lana Popham, announced the “BC Oyster Recovery Fund”, a million-dollar fund that can be accessed by BC oyster farmers to support this year’s oyster stock re-seeding efforts.

The fund comes at a critical time for oyster farmers given the recent losses caused by the most recent Norovirus event. Those eligible can apply and receive 75% of the amount spent on oyster seed purchased after January 1, 2018 to a maximum of \$10,000.

Additional information as well as details on how to apply for funding can be found on the Aboriginal Aquaculture web site:

[www.aboriginalaquaculture.com](http://www.aboriginalaquaculture.com)

or the Provincial web site:

<https://www.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/programs/bc-oyster-recovery-fund>

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## Seaweed Aquaculture

**Low Entry Cost, Environmentally Sustainable & Profitable; is it the New Aquaculture Frontier?**

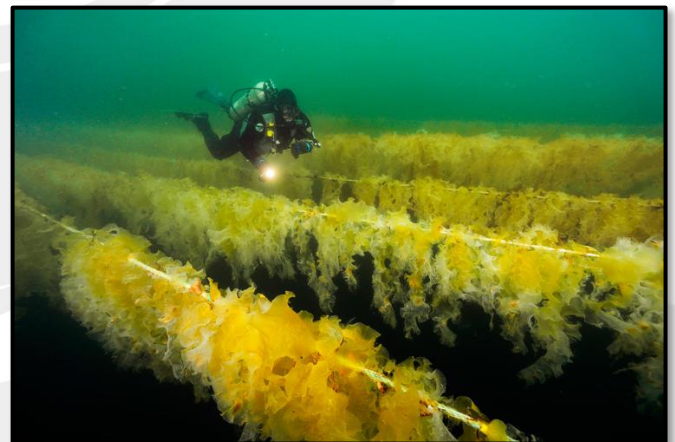
No one will argue against aquaculture being the future of sustainable food production for an ever-increasing global population however, with so much attention given to finfish and shellfish farming these days, one could be excused for not knowing much or thinking about the opportunities presented by seaweed aquaculture as a profitable and relatively simple approach to farming our oceans and generating income.

A rising number of valuable uses being found for seaweed is driving global demand; more than 25 million metric tonnes of seaweed is now farmed

annually, most of it in the developing world such as China, Indonesia, South Korea & the Philippines. The U.S. \$6.4 billion annual seaweed harvest now exceeds in value world lemon and lime crops. In the last decade, seaweed cultivation has been expanding rapidly thanks to growing demand for its use in pharmaceuticals, nutraceuticals and antimicrobial products, as well as biotechnological applications and, the global demand for seaweed has exceeded, and will continue to do so, the ability of wild harvesting to provide adequate supply. (FAO 2015)

Seaweed aquaculture is much simpler and much less expensive to get into compared to other forms of aquaculture. The steps include selecting and applying for a Provincial Crown Land Marine Plant Aquaculture Tenure, select the species you wish to grow and the type of grow-out system you plan on using, you then “seed” your site and let Mother Nature (sun and the nutrients in clean ocean water) work its magic and plan your harvest in as little as 4 months from start.

Many Coastal First Nations of British Columbia are located in prime areas with great potential for seaweed aquaculture and, with know-how, commitment and capacity, are well positioned to lead the way in the development of a profitable seaweed aquaculture industry in BC.





## Seaweed Aquaculture *continued*

The AAA has been researching and learning about seaweed aquaculture and have resources and experience to support all Aboriginal businesses, organizations or individuals that wishes to start a seaweed farm.

Farming seaweed offers near limitless benefits; when practiced near and around fish farms, it enhances the ocean's ability to process fish waste and convert it into human or animal food, fertilizers, biofuels and medicine while at the same time help mitigate ocean acidification and help remediate pressured ocean ecosystems; in other words, a fantastic tool in cleaning up our waters and creating new marine animal habitat.

Not a bad story when one considers that farmed seaweed can fetch up to \$1,200 CAD per tonne. If you would like to learn more about seaweed farming, we can include it in an upcoming AAA workshop in your area; if interested we want to hear from you. "Kelp is the new kale..."

<https://www.bcbusiness.ca/BC-kelp-farming-is-untapped-resource>

<https://blog.nationalgeographic.org/2016/09/03/booming-seaweed-farming-exposes-producers-and-environment-to-risks-experts-warn/>

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## First Nation Project Funds Needed

Over the last number of years, the Aboriginal Aquaculture in Canada Initiative has provided funds to support community based Aboriginal aquaculture projects. The project fund has been very popular with demand always exceeding the funding available.

The project funds supported early stage business development, feasibility and proof of concept as well as funds to support start up and expansion of businesses including capital costs. The project fund was successful as the project activities resulted in the creation of local job employing community members, building capacity and generating wealth.

The funding has enabled some of the project proponents to take the next steps in building their aquaculture initiatives with some now planning for further expansion and investigating new species.

The AAA noting the impact and importance of the project fund has approached Fisheries and Oceans and Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and asked them to identify funds for 2018-2019 to support First Nations aquaculture projects. "With the AACI ending last March 31, nothing has been announced to replace the economic development funds for 2018-2019. There continues to be a need for community-based project funding for aquaculture. There is no dedicated funding available to support Aboriginal entrepreneurs or community based Aboriginal aquaculture projects." Richard Harry, AAA Executive Director.

