



# aquaculture news

ISSUE 3, DECEMBER 2007

## Welcome to another edition of the Aquaculture Newsletter

### Improving water quality in the Shoalhaven River

Shoalhaven growers have been working hard to address water quality issues in recent years. They have implemented some excellent programmes with the CMA and local dairy farmers. A recent meeting with local government and those involved in restoring water quality in Wallis Lake has also proved beneficial.



Works in Wallis Lake since 1997 have led to direct harvest classification and a reduction in average rainfall closures from 10 days to 4 days. Shoalhaven growers are hoping to emulate this success by working co-operatively with Shoalhaven Council. The Council recently approved a \$15,000 water quality monitoring budget for two years and \$3,000 to support an oyster marketing initiative and brand launch next year.

### New extension officer appointed

Steve McOrrie has been appointed as the NSW DPI Extension Officer. This is a temporary two year position. The position will focus primarily on the needs of the oyster industry. Steve recently visited north coast oyster farms, prawn and fish farms. NSW DPI also welcomes Katie Sachs into the Oyster Policy Officer position vacated by Steve. Steve will continue to assist the land based sector in conjunction with research staff from Grafton and Port Stephens. Contact: Steve McOrrie, NSW DPI 4916 3921 or Grafton Aquaculture Centre on 6640 1600

### Landbased Aquaculture Consultative Group

On the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2007, the Landbased Aquaculture Consultative Group held its annual meeting in Sydney.

Key items on the agenda included: marketing, industry development, importation of fish products, Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme, chemical Minor Use Permits, disease certification, regulation amendments, draft NSW Land Based Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy, Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) for the salmonid industry and broodstock collection permits. The Group also met by teleconference on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2007 to work on actions arising from previous meetings.

If you wish to obtain more detailed information on the meeting please visit the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees)

### Hawkesbury River Update

Hawkesbury River oyster farmers have been busy cleaning up dead oysters and infrastructure in the estuary made redundant from the outbreak of QX. To-date more than 7,000 tonnes of material have been removed and disposed of. Farmers have developed innovative ways of removing waste material - even down to collapsed sticks resting in the mud. It is noted that Hawkesbury River farmers have made big inroads with removing tar pots and the use of tar treated timber from the estuary. Contact: Broken Bay Oysters 9985 1585





### Dr John Nell retires

After a distinguished career with NSW Fisheries/NSW DPI, Dr John Nell retired on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2007. His pioneering work in oyster breeding technology spanned 28 years. Congratulations John and good luck for the future.

### Trade directory listing – final call

NSW DPI is inviting permit holders and other stakeholders to be listed, free of charge, in the Aquaculture Industry Directory. The directory provides details of aquaculture producers and providers of aquaculture related services and equipment. Contact: Joyce Paterson, NSW DPI 4916 3919 or [joyce.paterson@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:joyce.paterson@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

### EMS Workshop

An EMS (environmental management system) identifies actions that growers will do to protect the environment they rely on and also, things that others need to do to protect this important part of the business. Clyde River Oyster Farmers have prepared and adopted an EMS this year and have used it to access funds for clean-up and environmental improvement projects. This EMS will be highlighted at an 'EMS in Aquaculture' workshop to be held in May 2008 in Newcastle. Any permit holders interested in preparing an EMS or attending the workshop should Contact: Tim Gippel, NSW DPI 4916 3823

### New Aquaculture Regulation – Labelling (other than shellfish)

*Please note: New Information to be specified on containers of aquaculture products for sale.*

A person must not consign or convey aquaculture products (other than shellfish) for sale in a container that does not have marked, in a legible and durable manner, on the outside:

- the name of the suppliers, and
- the supplier's Aquaculture Permit Number, and
- the batch identification details, and
- the species and type (for example, live fish, whole or grilled and gutted) of aquaculture product that it contains.

This clause does not apply to the consignment of live aquaculture products if bulk live fish transport containers (for example, drums, vats or tanks) are

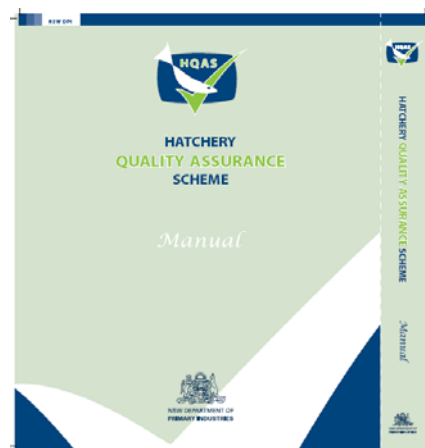
used in the consignment and records of the consignment are maintained in the transport vehicle. *Batch identification details*, means - the date that the aquaculture product was processed or packed, or an identifier used in relation to the aquaculture product in accordance with a quality assurance program.

### Minor Use Permits (MUP's)

Three MUP's were approved recently for chemicals used in aquaculture. They include salt, formalin and oxytetracycline. Another four MUP's are being progressed with the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Association. Contact: Graeme Bowley, NSW DPI 4916 3845

### Hatchery Quality Assurance Scheme (HQAS)

Hatcheries that previously expressed an interest in the scheme have been sent application forms and copies of the HQAS. Accreditation audits have commenced. Hatcheries will need to be accredited by August 2008 if they wish to participate in freshwater fish stocking to waterways. Contact: Tim Gippel, NSW DPI 4916 3823



### Estuary harvest openings

The NSW Food Authority has announced a re-opening of the Bellinger River and partial re-opening of Zone 5B Tilligerry Creek for oyster harvest. Both estuaries were closed in 2005 due to pollution.

### NSW Aquaculture Research Advisory Committee

ARAC met in Sydney on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> September 2007. The 18<sup>th</sup> was set aside as a workshop to draft a new Research & Development Strategic Plan that includes lease and land-based farmers. Mr Peter Dundas-Smith kindly facilitated this workshop. This plan provides a five year strategy for guiding research and development investment in the NSW aquaculture industry, and direction on its implementation. The plan has been drafted and will be circulated to all permit holders, NSW Farmers Association and other relevant bodies before seeking approval from the Minister for Department of Primary Industries. Contact: Jo Pickles, NSW DPI 4916 3901

**Upcoming Auction for Wallis Lake Oyster Leases**  
NSW DPI has identified a number of unlet lease areas in Wallis Lake that are suitable for oyster aquaculture and will offer these areas to industry by public auction. The proposed auction date is 26th February 2008 at the Forster-Tuncurry Memorial Services Club. Further details will be advertised in the NSW Government Gazette and the local newspaper in the near future. Should you require any information about the leases or their location. **Contact: Raelene Atkinson, NSW DPI 4916 3843**

#### **OISAS commended at 2007 NSW Premier's Public Sector Awards**

NSW DPI is pleased to advise that the NSW Oyster Industry Sustainable Aquaculture Strategy (OISAS) won a commendation in the NSW Premier's Public Sector Awards held on Friday 9th November 2007. OISAS, which was developed in close consultation with the oyster industry, was nominated under the NSW State Plan category *Growing Prosperity Across NSW*.

#### **New technology update – steel wire long line banned**

If you have a bright idea for new infrastructure or technology you should discuss it with NSW DPI prior to installation. Steve McOrrie, Aquaculture Extension Officer, will be able to provide advice on whether your proposal is likely to meet NSW DPI and community standards. This reminder comes after NSW DPI stepped in to ban the use of steel wire on long lines. A small scale trial of this wire is planned and until this trial is complete, all new use of this wire remains banned. **Contact: Steve McOrrie, NSW DPI 4916 3921**

#### **Disease Diagnostic Manual**

Following the progression of Minor Use Permits for chemicals used in aquaculture, the Manual has been forwarded to the printer. Copies will be provided to relevant permit holders shortly. **Contact: Tim Gippel, NSW DPI 4916 3823**



#### **Pacific oyster closure**

NSW DPI will be reviewing the Pacific oyster control closure during the next (2008-09) financial year. NSW DPI's Aquatic Biosecurity Unit will lead this review, with input from both industry and NSW DPI Aquaculture news, Issue 3, DECEMBER 2007

Aquaculture Management. **Contact: Melissa Walker, Strategy Leader Aquatic Biosecurity (Pests) 4916 3911**

#### **QX closure review – adoption of risk-based approach**

Consultation with industry has recently been finalised and has established industry support for QX risk-ranking of estuaries. The current complex QX closures in NSW are being reviewed and re-drafted according to risk-ranking. It is envisaged that the revised closure will be forwarded to POAG for input early in 2008. **Contact: Jane Frances, Manager Aquatic Biosecurity 4916 3904**

#### **OISAS project referrals rolling in**

The development application referral process initiated under OISAS has seen a steady stream of projects that could potentially impact on the oyster industry being assessed by NSW DPI Fisheries Conservation Officers and Aquaculture Management staff. Referrals are coming from Councils, Department of Planning for major projects, and directly from developers who want to make sure oyster industry issues are resolved early on in the project planning phase. Local Shellfish Program Co-ordinators are being notified by fax of significant referrals so that growers can also make a submission to Council if required. **Contact: Katie Sachs, NSW DPI 4916 3913**

#### **POAG highlights**

POAG met on 5 November 2007 in Sydney. Key items on the agenda included:

- OISAS implementation and processing of application referrals received by NSW DPI;
- A summary of the Diffuse Source Water Pollution Strategy (DSWPS); Best practice guidelines for harvest protection and harvest area risk assessments will be prepared by NSW DPI and NSW Food Authority, as actions under the DSWPS. Industry consultation early 2008;
- Concern raised over valuations of oyster industry land-based sites;
- Phase 2 of Operation Trident (targeting oyster theft) is proceeding;
- POAG to request that the Seafood Industry Advisory Council (SIAC) consider a review of bag limits for recreational oyster harvest in light of potential food safety issues. Structural adjustment will also be raised at SIAC;
- Progression of a risk based approach to QX management. Green shore crab identification cards have been circulated to south coast lease holders;
- A review of charges for the use of NSW Shellfish Program data;
- New technology to be discussed and approved by NSW DPI before installation;

- Spat recording will be provided by estuary in the NSW DPI Annual Production Report;
- POAG requested an amendment to the *Fisheries Management (Regulation) 2007* that provides for the waiver of new lease application fees.

If you wish to obtain more information on the meeting please visit the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries/aquaculture/committees)

### **Aquaculture involved in equine influenza operation**

Equine influenza is caused by a highly contagious virus which can spread rapidly in horses, donkeys, mules and zebras. Australia has been free of equine influenza until this outbreak.

Aquaculture staff previously trained in exotic disease first response roles have been assisting with the NSW Department of Primary Industries efforts to eradicate this disease. If in the unfortunate event that an exotic disease event occurs within the aquaculture industry the experience gained by aquaculture staff in this disease control response will be of value. If you wish to obtain more information on equine influenza please visit the NSW DPI website [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au).

### **Lease & Permit Application Forms - Revised**

Application forms and information guides are currently being revised and where relevant will now include the Aquaculture Lease Area Condition Statement (ALAC). The purpose of the ALAC is for all parties subject to a lease or permit transaction to identify and agree on the condition of a lease area or work required, prior to the applications being processed. The ALAC aims to improve the time taken to process oyster lease transactions. The lease condition statements relate mainly to neat and tidy and marking provisions. The new application forms and information guides will be available on the Internet [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries.aquaculture/forms](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fisheries.aquaculture/forms) or by contacting the Aquaculture Administration at Port Stephens on 4982 1232. From 1 January 2008 all lease and permit applications will need to be submitted using the new forms.

### **New Industries Development Program**

Commonwealth grants of up to \$120,000 are now available for agribusinesses to commercialise their products, technology or service.

The new industries development program is made up of a number of elements. The first is a pilot commercialisation program that is a competitive, merit-based grants program that provides matched funding of between \$35,000 and \$120,000 to agribusinesses that have finished their R&D stage and are ready to take the next step to commercialise their product, technology or service.

The second is an In Market Experience Scholarship designed to help potential business managers to gain valuable market knowledge on their proposed industry by making available \$12,500 for market exploration activities.

Application forms and program guidelines are available from [www.daff.gov.au/agribiz](http://www.daff.gov.au/agribiz). Alternatively, contact NIDP on 1300 884 588 or email your details to [nidp@daff.gov.au](mailto:nidp@daff.gov.au).

### **NSW Oyster Industry Field Days**

NSW DPI was pleased to support the NSW Farmers Association Field Days at Batemans Bay and Wallis Lake in September 2007. Over 220 people attended the field days and trade show.

**Sydney Royal Fine Food Show – Aquaculture Competition** – Judging of farmed seafood – prawns, Sydney rock oysters, trout and salmon (hot and cold smoked, pate, caviar, terrine and mousse) will take place 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008. Entries close 8<sup>th</sup> February 2008 – see [www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au](http://www.sydneyroyalshows.com.au) or call Helen Parker on 02 9704 1218.

***Wishing you all a very***



***and a Happy and Prosperous New Year from  
NSW DPI Aquaculture Staff.***

*Aquaculture News* is a newsletter for the aquaculture industry in NSW.

Editor: Joyce Paterson

[joyce.paterson@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:joyce.paterson@dpi.nsw.gov.au)

[www.dpi.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au)

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