Covid-19 has created challenging times for our society and our industry. Information on Federal assistance programs, changes in programs and clarification of programs seem to be hitting our inboxes faster than we can read it. Be sure to frequently check the “News” section of the FAA website (www.flaa.org) for the latest relevant industry assistance information as well as other news items of interest to our members.

I was encouraged to read President Trump’s Executive Order (EO) “Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth” issued by the White House on May 7, 2020. It is posted on our website. This EO addresses multiple issues important to the offshore aquaculture industry as well as issues important to the seafood industry. It clarifies the Executive Branch’s position on how the regulatory processes for permitting offshore aquaculture projects must work within and between the agencies. Items of note include designating NOAA as the lead agency for aquaculture projects located outside of the waters of any State or Territory and within the exclusive economic zone of the United States. It also identifies NOAA to be the lead agency responsible for navigating an aquaculture project through the Federal environmental review and authorization process with maximum time limits mandated on each process. The EO also establishes the concept of offshore Aquaculture Opportunity areas, 2 such areas must be established within 12 months of this Order and 2 more areas must be established in each of the 4 subsequent years. This finally officially establishes offshore aquaculture as a player with other competing offshore interests.

Florida’s Commissioner of Agriculture Nicole “Nikki” Fried has sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross requesting that the U.S. DOC strongly consider the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) as a vital partner in enacting the Executive Order’s goals. You can read a copy of Commissioner Fried’s letter on the FAA website.

The FAA stands ready to assist the U.S. DOC, NOAA and FDACS to expand the Florida aquaculture industry into federal waters surrounding our state.

This EO is certainly welcome news, but we still need Congress to pass legislation to clear legal hurdles that are still impeding the development of aquaculture projects in the U.S. EEZ. I urge you to reach out to your federal representatives and voice your support for this issue.

This is the time of year when the FAA starts the nominating process for the re-election of Directors or for consideration of new Directors. I am the Nominating Committee chairperson this year. Three directors; Evans, Tanner and Wills are up for re-election. All three have agreed to run for another 3-year volunteer term. Our bylaws allow for independent nominations from our membership. I encourage any member who has a passion for this industry and has a desire to contribute to our Association to contact me. The deadline for independent nominations endorsed with the names of not less than ten (10) active members of the Association is August 7, 2020. All potential candidates will be vetted by the Nominating Committee for possible inclusion on the autumn ballot.

Nominees to the Board will be elected by vote of the Active Membership this autumn, with the results announced at the Annual Meeting. If you have an interest in serving on our Board of Directors or any questions regarding this nominating/voting process, I encourage you to contact me or the FAA office.

Covid-19 and related issues are certainly creating difficulties for all businesses, but small businesses are being hit the hardest, including Florida aquaculturists. Federal assistance is a help for some, but not all. If possible, reach out to your neighbor with a helping hand and at the very least, give words of encouragement. We are all in this together.

Stay safe,
Jim Michaels
President
Florida Aquaculture Association
Upcoming Events

October 2020

Virtual General Membership Meeting (specific date and time TBA)

Due to continued COVID-19 concerns we have decided to hold our annual membership meeting virtually. As we get details, all members will be notified.

What's on your bumper?

Thousands of dollars have been raised from the sale of the Aquaculture license plate to benefit aquaculture education, research, and development programs. Don't forget- the FAA receives funding from the Florida Aquaculture license plate to carry out important educational programs.

The FAA newsletter is funded with a grant through the HBOI Foundation.

We are grateful for their continued support for the FAA.

Commodity Representatives
Alligators- Allen Register, Palmdale, (863)675-0623
Aquatic Plants- Brandon McLane, Davie, (954)472-5120
Food Fish- Joe Cardenas, Ft. Pierce, (561)866-7092
Shellfish- Leslie Sturmer, Cedar Key, (352)543-5057
Suppliers- Thomas Drury, Apopka, (407)992-5601
Tropical Fish- David Rawlins, Lithia, (813)737-3418

Lobbyist- Jim Spratt, Tallahassee, (850)228-1296
Executive Director- Tiffany Conner (813)438-3522
COVID-19

The quick spread of COVID-19 throughout the world has caused major concerns not only here in Florida but throughout the world. Here in Florida, FDACS has quickly and effectively prepared many documents to assist agriculture businesses and farmers. Below is a list of documents, websites, and other resources that FDACS and other state and federal agencies have developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

General guidance regarding COVID-19 information directly from FDACS:
https://www.fdacs.gov/Consumer-Resources/Guidance-for-Consumers-on-COVID-19

US Chamber of Commerce COVID-19 Emergency Loans  Small Business Guide and Checklist:

US Senate Committee Guide to the CARES Act

FL Executive Order 20-91- ‘Safer at Home’ and Essential Worker Movement form
https://www.flaa.org/copy-of-home

FMCSAEmergency Declaration No. 2020-002
fmcsa.dot.gov (hyperlink)

COVID-19 2nd Quarter Impact Survey

The National Aquaculture Association requests that the US aquaculture community (farms and allied businesses) participate in a 15-minute survey developed by Virginia Tech and The Ohio State universities to assess the direct and indirect effects of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on US aquaculture and to gather input on types of assistance that will be most useful.

Even if you have not been negatively affected, that data is important to capturing the full effects of pandemic management efforts. Please click on this link to the Quarter 2 survey, covering the period from April 10th, 2020 to June 29th, 2020.

https://virginiatech.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4Ue13Pmb6khonA1

This survey should take about 25 minutes to complete. No personally identifiable information (name, address, e-mail, telephone number, IP address, etc.) will be collected. All data from this survey will remain anonymous.

This survey will close at 11:59 pm (eastern time) on July 17, 2020.

If you would like a copy of the summary results, or have any questions about this study, please contact: Jonathan van Senten -jvansenten@vt.edu or Matthew Smith -smith.11460@osu.edu.
Legislative Budget

- There was a $93 billion budget proposed, Gov. DeSantis approved $92 billion of the proposed budget.
  - Most of the agriculture related line items were not cut, they may not have received as much as requested, but were not part of the $1 billion cut.
    - There were no cuts to the Division of Aquaculture but the additional asks were not approved. Portia Sapp - The asks that were not approved this year will be requested again next year along with $426,000 for ARC and an additional $1 million to restructure how ARC funding works.
  - Part of the approved budget was $3.8 million for UF IFAS with $2 million of that recurring funding. This was a major win for UF IFAS as the past few years have been difficult for their funding requests.
    - Scott Angle was named the new Vice President of UF IFAS and he has a great understanding of not only academia but politics and the industry as well. His new position and approved recurring funding may lend an upper hand for aquaculture when asking for additional support in the form of facilities or extension agents.
  - All in all, the budget approval as it stands now was a huge win for most and especially aquaculture. While this year can be called a success, we should all keep in mind that due to COVID-19 and major shutdowns this year, the state will likely look for ways to recoup lost income through increasing fees and licensing expenses. The methods or recovering lost funding have not been discussed and there is still roughly $6 billion is reserves, the potential of increases is high.

Legislative Reports

- Rep. Toby Overdorf (R) has a current knowledge base and investment into aquaculture. After meeting with him in December, he is a strong candidate to champion for various aquaculture needs.
  - Large Mouth Bass Commercial Production: Rep. Overdorf has been briefed on this subject and a meeting is in the works for later in July. As of now, he is a strong support of this issue and would like to see it through.
  - ARC Funding/ Support: While speaking with Rep. Overdorf on the LMB issues, we would like to address ARC funding as well. He certainly understands the need for these funds and would be a great champion for the council.

FDACS Report from Portia Sapp- FDACS Division of Aquaculture Director

- As Jim Spratt mentioned, the budget approval was great as we received most of what was asked. The request to replace division vehicles was not approval but we plan to ask again next year. The division will also be asking for $426,000 for the six approved ARC projects an an additional $1 million for the potential restructuring of ARC funding.
- Legislative reports: Our request for the public records exemption for aquaculture producers and shellfish audits did not pass. There was plenty of support this year so we feel confident that it will pass next year.
- Recently, President Donald Trump issued an executive order seeking aquaculture opportunity areas and sustainable seafood sources. Commissioner Nikki Fried quickly wrote a letter to Sen. Ross asking for Florida to be identified as an aquaculture opportunity area. With supporting letters from state and national industry leaders, we are hopeful that we can be identified as an aquaculture opportunity area.
- Florida Gar and Large Mouth Bass- Portia Sapp recently spoke with John Fury (FWC) about the risk assessment completed on Florida Gar. Sapp reported she is good with the report and would like to move forward. For the Large Mouth Bass issue, Fury is still moving forward with the virtual stakeholder meeting and will report back to Sapp with any information. Fury is retiring from the commission in September and expressed to Sapp that he would like to have the LMB issue set and moving before he leaves his position.
FDACS Career Openings

FDACS Division of Aquaculture has many openings in which they would like to fulfill with qualified individuals looking to further their career in aquaculture.

Aquaculture/Melbourne/Environmental Specialist II/Position #42003187 is posted with a closing date of 7/23/2020
https://jobs.myflorida.com/job/MELBOURNE ENVIRONMENTAL SPECIALIST II-42003187 FL-32901/659121200/

Aquaculture/Apalachicola/Laboratory Technician/Position #42003139 is posted with a closing date of 7/23/2020
https://jobs.myflorida.com/job/APALACHICOLA LABORATORY TECHNICIAN I-42003139 FL-32320/659121400/

For more information about these positions, please visit the FDACS Division of Aquaculture website: https://www.fdacs.gov/Divisions-Offices/Aquaculture

Annual Aquaculture Drug Approval Coordination Workshop Goes VIRTUAL
July 28th-30th, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership (AADAP) is presenting the 26th Annual Aquaculture Drug Approval Coordination Workshop as an online, virtual event. Below is a tentative line-up of virtual presentations. Each session will include time for Q&A:

- FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM) Updates Session: Meg Oeller & Matthew Lucia
- Indexing Session: Dorothy Bailey
- Effluents Session: FDA CVM Environmental Safety Team and EPA

The presentations will be conducted using the Microsoft Teams platform, and a link to join the workshop will be sent out in the coming weeks. No registration will be required for this virtual workshop. As the agenda develops, we'll make additional announcements and post information on the AADAP website.

FAA Commodity Representatives

Commodity Representatives serve on the FAA Board to ensure that all aquaculture commodities and sectors are represented. We also recommend reaching out to your commodity representative with questions or concerns. If you are unsure about which commodity you would fall into or if you do not fit into one of the following commodities, please reach out to Tiffany Conner at Tiffany@flaa.org or 813.438.FLAA (3522).

- **Alligators:** Allen Register, 863.675.0623, allen@gatorama.com
- **Aquatic Plants:** Brandon McLane, 954.472.5120, brandon@floridaaquatic.com
- **Food Fish:** Joe Cardenas, 561.866.7092, joe@aquacofarms.com
- **Shellfish:** Leslie Sturmer, 352.543.5057, lnst@ufl.edu
- **Suppliers:** Tom Drury, 844.946.4272, druryt14@gmail.com
- **Tropical Fish:** David Rawlins, 813.737.3418, rawlins@ij.net

FTFFA Co-Op Store has moved!
There new location is at 7002 E. Broadway Ave. in Tampa 33619
You can reach them at 813-620-2094 or https://ftffacoop.com/
Florida Aquaculture Association

The mission of the Florida Aquaculture Association is to provide a unified voice for the Florida aquaculture industry that ensures its sustainability, protects its profitability, and encourages its development in an environmentally responsible manner.

What we do for Florida aquaculture:

- Keep industry guidelines up-to-date
  - FAA's advice is sought for updating the FL Aquaculture Best Management Practices Manual and provides updates for the FL Aquaculture Plan
- Work with lobbyists and legislatures to support aquaculture
  - Funding for research and extension services, tax exemptions, and federal insurances are all fought for by FAA lobbyists
- Provide support for the future of aquaculture
  - Partner with aquaculture educators throughout the state to provide them with the resources necessary to properly educate students about the aquaculture industry in Florida and help them prepare for the FL Aquaculture Technician Certification.

Benefits of Membership:

- Networking opportunities with other aquaculture professionals
- Access to the 'Members Only' forum on the FAA website
- Fresh and current news about Florida aquaculture
- Direct information from the NAA, FDACS Division of Aquaculture, and other aquaculture organizations.

Pictured: FL Ag Commissioner Nikki Fried and FAA Board Member, Barry Hart discussing FL Aqua at the Fresh From Florida Ag Breakfast at the FL State Fair

FAA Member Events:

- Taste of Florida Agriculture Reception in Tallahassee
- Fresh from Florida Agriculture Breakfast at the Florida State Fair
- FAA Annual General Membership Meeting

Membership Application

Please send the application and dues to P.O. Box 2974 Riverview, FL 33578
Check must be made payable to the Florida Aquaculture Association.
You can also join online at www.flaa.org/join-now

Name: __________________________
Company/ Organization: __________________________
Mailing Address: __________________________
City: __________________________
State: ________ Zip Code: ____________
Phone: __________________________
Email: __________________________

How would you prefer to receive your quarterly newsletter?
- Printed
- Email
- Both

__ Active Membership ($150): Only persons, companies, or organizations actively cultivating aquaculture products within the State of Florida are eligible to become active members. FDACS AQ#:__________________________
Commodity Group (Check all that apply): __ Alligators __Aquatic Plants __ Shellfish __Food Fish __ Tropical Fish __Other: __________________________

__ Associate Membership ($100): Any individual or entity engaged in providing equipment, supplies, materials, or services used in Florida’s aquaculture industry or any individual with an interest in Florida’s aquaculture and who shares the objectives of the FAA. Check all that apply: __Consultant __Education __Extension __Manufacturer __Research __Service __Supplier

__ Affiliate ($50): Any person, firm, or organization interested in Florida Aquaculture.

__ Student ($20): Any individual currently enrolled in an accredited educational institute.