

BC SHELLFISH GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Growing the BC Shellfish Industry: From Challenges to Opportunities

A member-driven discussion on unlocking the potential of BC's shellfish sector.

We have an opportunity to build a bigger, stronger and more competitive BC shellfish industry.

Roadmap for today:

- Identify the biggest constraints to industry growth.
- Explore practical solutions and opportunities.
- Identify where collective action through BCSGA can make a difference.

Three questions. Every sector. One objective.

① **IDENTIFY**: What is holding us back?

② **EXPLORE**: What would make a meaningful difference?

③ **ACT**: What could we do collectively?

Ground rules:

Think beyond your own business.
Be constructive and solution-oriented.
Focus on industry-wide opportunities, not individual operational or licensing cases.

Hatchery

SECURING THE FOUNDATION FOR INDUSTRY GROWTH



What needs to change to ensure BC has a reliable, resilient and scalable supply of high-quality shellfish seed?

Hatchery

SECURING THE FOUNDATION FOR INDUSTRY GROWTH

Responses from Audience:

- Paul: Clam seeds are expensive – there is no money in running a hatchery. The overhead.
- Alex says – raise your price. The economics have changed.
- Jesse: by demand, not trying to race to the ground.
- Discussed seed cost – it is cheap in Canada (JP)
- Is there a market in the US for BC based seed?
- If we could price it accordingly, there is enough capacity for oysters but not clams.
- All the pieces are there
- If there is stability and they know the demand will be there – they could invest in increased capacity. Needs some risk reduction = consistent access to the market
- JP asked whether there was opportunity for seed sale in EU – Nico mentioned live will always be difficult
- Alex – a lot of clams in BC reducing recruitment due to OA.
- Reducing mortality would help with costs

Nursery

BUILDING CAPACITY BETWEEN SEED AND FARM



How do we improve the capacity, efficiency and accessibility of nursery systems to support industry growth?

No additional responses from Audience

Grow-Out

INCREASING PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY



What is preventing BC shellfish farmers from increasing production and improving productivity on their existing tenures?

Grow-Out

INCREASING PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY

Responses from Audience:

- Jesse: Licensing and regulatory burden, barrier to the expansion of current businesses
- Sometimes people will not carry on an operation
- Licensing and compliance are a direct cost for the industry. It is a significant cost.
- Can you grow first and clean up later?
- Cost of processing and lack of access to markets, having to sell to a third party or custom process
- Interconnectivity of the value chain – impacts along the chain – try and single out one or two focus areas.
- Regulatory – all the costs reduce financial viability
- Older growers trying to transition out of the industry
- Financing and purchasing - lack of access to capital financing
- License – shorter term. People are looking for longer term stability. This is a barrier to new entrants.
- Agriculture – ALR land. We should have an ALR type for aquaculture tenures. New leases in communities do not get designated and no new farms were established despite community approval.
- Aquaculture is Agriculture – we should continue to push this

Processing

ADDING VALUE AND BUILDING CAPACITY



How do we build a more competitive and capable processing sector that can capture greater value from BC shellfish production?

No additional responses from Audience

Sales and Marketing

GROWING MARKETS AND DEMAND



How do we increase demand for BC shellfish, strengthen market access and capture greater value in domestic and international markets?

Sales and Marketing

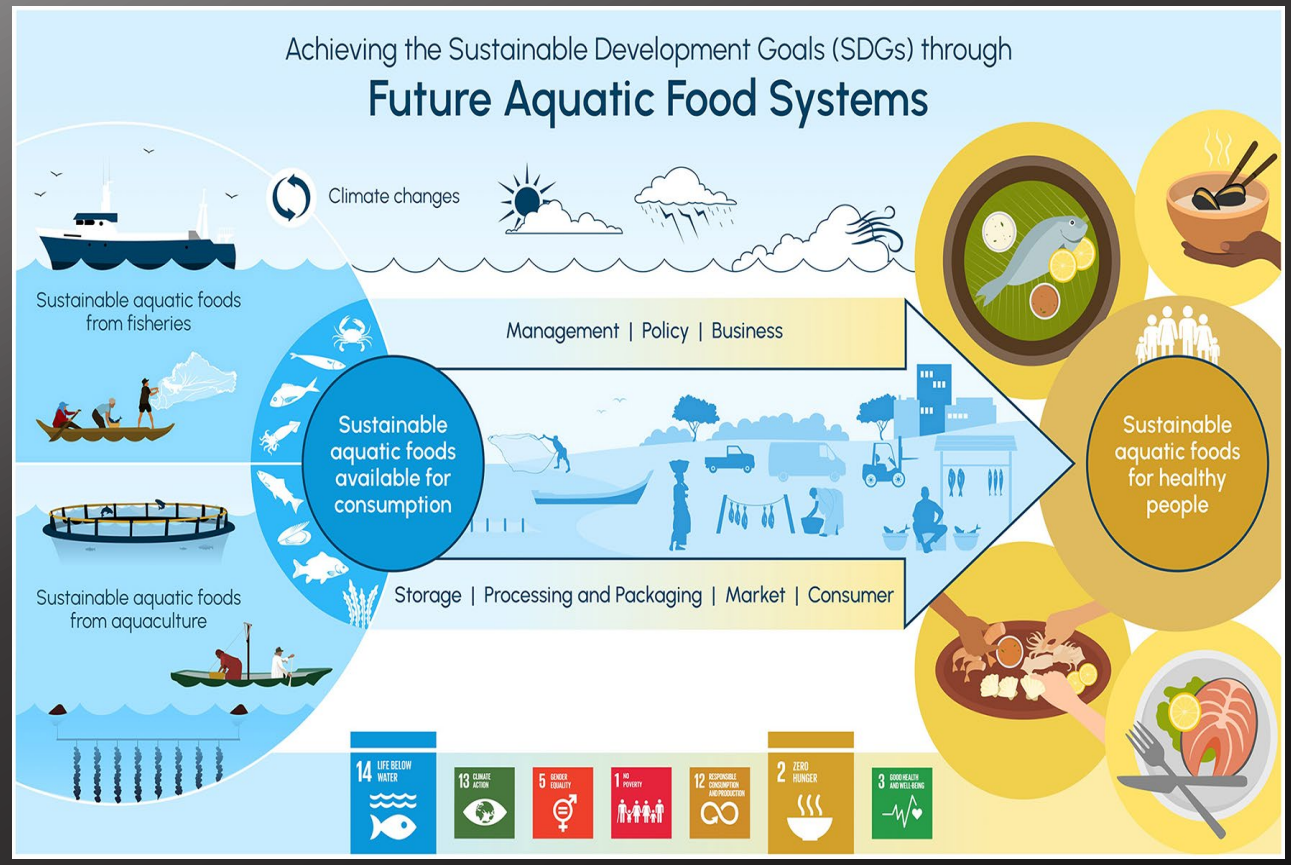
GROWING MARKETS AND DEMAND

Responses from Audience:

- More presence – get ourselves to the tradeshows across the world
- Ways to create prestige and ID BC shellfish
- Does the public see the difference?
- Education – lack of understanding around cooking – could we focus on domestic education? how to prepare, what's safe, domestic education around shellfish and how to eat it – prepare it
- Consistency – effort into the product, developing trust – norovirus closure for 6 months breaks this and ruins efforts. Need consistency to get into the market.
- Question raised about live-aboard and the impact they have on the farming areas and closures.

Connecting the Value Chain

THE BIGGER PICTURE



If BC wanted to double shellfish production over the next 5–10 years, where would the first bottleneck occur?

What can we actually influence?

FROM CHALLENGES TO ACTION



What should the BCSGA prioritize?

FROM CHALLENGES TO ACTION

If the BCSGA could focus on only THREE initiatives over the next three years to help grow the BC shellfish industry, what should they be?

What should the BCSGA prioritize?

FROM CHALLENGES TO ACTION

Clear themes in discussions:

- Clam capacity
- Presence and marketing
- Improvement in regulatory environment
- Confidence in the licensing system
- If these key things are in place – should equal success.

Project ideas for the BCSGA:

- Solve norovirus
- Development of Clam capacity
- Access to Agricultural grants/funding
- Continued investment in research
- Market Growth

Building the next generation of BC shellfish farming

A stronger industry requires a stronger value chain



Our challenge is not simply to maintain the industry we have today, but to create the conditions for it to grow.