

Fish, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Initiative

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The University of Rhode Island (URI) has traditionally played a major role in addressing marine related issues; however, efforts were distributed among numerous departments, colleges, and campuses. A new initiative has been developed combining the talents of various faculty members and staff throughout the university to develop an integrated approach to issues in fish, fisheries, and aquaculture. Through this initiative, URI will enhance its leadership capabilities in the fields of marine science on local, regional, and international scales.



Fish, Fisheries, and Aquaculture and the Importance of Seafood

The production of seafood is extremely important to our national economy. Worldwide, seafood accounts for 19 percent of the total human consumption of animal protein, with almost 1 million people relying on fish as their primary source of animal protein.



In the last three decades, the value of landings from Rhode Island has risen exponentially from less than \$5 million in the mid-1960s to more than \$75 million in the 1990s. The Rhode Island Seafood Council estimates that the total value of the Rhode Island seafood industry in 1996 was over \$715 million dollars (including total domestically marketed landings, all economic activity accrued to the state because of exports, and in-state marketing).

The **mission** of the Fish, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Initiative at URI is to develop knowledge, educate the next generation of leaders, and disseminate information to help society utilize, conserve, and sustain its living aquatic resources.

At URI we envision a future in which:

- Resource prices will rise due to scarcity and increasing demand, aggravating the threats to fishery resources and emphasizing the need for sustainable management of fisheries and aquaculture.
- The number of fisheries and aquaculture researchers and managers will grow 10-fold. This new class of professionals will possess skills in a wide range of traditional disciplines, from natural resource sciences to the legal and political aspects of management, which will enable more effective communication with managers and decision-makers.
- Fish, Fisheries, and Aquaculture programs at URI will be global leaders in developing the knowledge and the skills needed for the sustainable development of living aquatic resources.

Equipped with this initiative, URI will have the tools to enhance its leadership in the marine sciences and better prepare students to enter the workforce as viable candidates for careers in fish, fisheries, and aquaculture. Current **activities** include:

Education

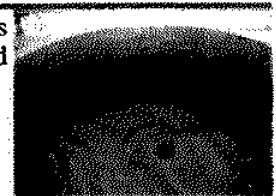
- Develop a multi-disciplinary, cross-departmental course on seafood production.
- Provide hands-on participation in seafood production through student internships and faculty externships.

Research

- Form cross-departmental collaborative teams to address issues in the areas of fish, fisheries, and aquaculture.
- Strengthen relationships between university, government, and the private sector.

Outreach

- Form a fisheries management working group with state, federal, and industry participants.
- Reestablish a topical fisheries forum.



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