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Aquatic Ecology / Aquaculture Research Projects

Aquaculture Research Projects

Aquaculture Development in Delaware

Although the aquaculture industry in Delaware is currently limited in scale, there is a large potential for growth. A lack of knowledge about growing aquatic species, which species to grow and how to market the products once they are produced, and the lack of a model that fits into the existing farm infrastructure, may in part, be responsible for the limited industry. At Delaware State University we are addressing these issues. Our efforts have largely been aimed at identifying suitable aquaculture species for use in DE and low input methods to raise them profitably.

Baitfish Aquaculture in the Mid-Atlantic
Baitfish aquaculture represents a strong growth area for industry in the Northeast. The necessary technology to culture species such as golden shiners and fathead minnow is well established, and these two species supply much of the freshwater bait market nationally. Conversely, in coastal areas much of the saltwater bait is wild caught. Development of culture technologies for locally popular, saltwater bait species such as mummichogs, Fundulus heteroclitus, can ensure consistent supplies and help avoid over exploitation of the resource. For the last few years we have been working to optimize culture methods for mummichogs.

Temperature and Salinity Dependent Growth of Weakfish
Weakfish, Cynoscion regalis, once supported an important sport and commercial fishery. Within the last twenty years, however, stock assessments and commercial catch of weakfish have steadily declined and have reached an all-time low. Coupled with the plummeting biomass of these fish, global warming poses a significant threat to not only weakfish, but also the entire marine ecosystem. Using aquaculture methods we are studying the effects of water temperature on weakfish.

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