



United States Aquaculture Society
President
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Dear USAS Members,

I'm sure you have been inundated with messages about how companies are responding to the COVID-19 issues in our country. Many states have closed bars and restaurants, along with discouraging large gatherings of people. Our friends at the National Shellfisheries Association have cancelled their annual meeting for 2020. The World Aquaculture Society, our parent society, has also postponed World Aquaculture 2020 in Singapore until December 2020. In addition to meeting cancellations and mandatory telework for many in our industry, I have also started to see reports on seafood news websites about how COVID-19 is beginning to affect seafood demand and sales. While farms are still producing seafood products, most of the aquaculture products in the US are primarily consumed in restaurants and less often prepared at home. There is no doubt our members all along the supply chain are starting to feel the impact of the ongoing pandemic.

The USAS Board wants to make you aware of several helpful resources available to the US Aquaculture Industry, to help you keep life and business as normal as possible over the next few weeks and months.

The US Small Business Administration (SBA) has a program through the states that provides targeted, small business loans to businesses and non-profits that have been severely impacted by COVID-19. You can learn more about this program on the SBA website here:
<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/disaster-assistance>

The National Fisheries Institute (NFI) has developed a seafood and coronavirus website with talking points to help people understand that the virus is not related to seafood, and encourage people to continue to order food from restaurants. <https://seafoodsafetycovid19.wordpress.com/>

Caird Rexroad at USDA (via aquacontacts) shared the AquacultureHub foundation has changed the ATOLL (Aquaculture Training Online Learning) course price to FREE. Please use the link below to learn how to grow your own food. <https://www.udemy.com/course/atoll-introduction-to-aquaculture/>

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has a list of five things you should know about stress and you can find that valuable information here:
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/stress/index.shtml>.

Additionally, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and the Crisis Text Line have trained counselors who are ready to listen. If you would like to talk to someone related to COVID-19,

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call the National Suicide Prevention Line: 1-800-273-8255, or text the word **SHARE** to 741741. Website links can be found here: <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org> | <https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>

One valuable resource many of you may already be aware of are the aquaculture extension professionals at Land Grant and/or Sea Grant institutions in your state. You may have heard many universities have closed for students to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, but **extension employees are still working and available to assist you**. In unique situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic, extension professionals try to keep up to date with any programs in our country and state that could benefit the aquaculture industry. These programs may be local disaster assistance programs similar to the SBA program, or could be informational assistance such as the NFI website. Like you, many of us are trying to navigate how to do our jobs 100% remotely, while also ensuring the health and safety of our families. I encourage you to reach out to these professionals in your state if you need assistance of any kind for your aquaculture operation. USAS members please share this letter with your fellow farmers and clients so they know there are resources available.

If you hear of any programs that can help US Aquaculture stakeholders navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, feel free to pass them along to me. I will try to forward them out to USAS membership.

Sincerely,

Matt Parker

President USAS