



NCRAC Announces Selected Funded Projects for Funding Year 2021: Press Release

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The North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) is one of the five Regional Aquaculture Centers established by Congress that are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). NCRAC is an administrative unit that was established in February 1988, and it serves as a focal point to assess needs, establish priorities, and implement research and extension educational programs in the 12-state agricultural heartland of the United States which includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

In 2020, NCRAC released a request for regional research and outreach proposals. The NCRAC Board of Directors met in March 2021 to select the full proposals they would like to see funded by NCRAC. The NCRAC Board of Directors consists of eleven individuals, four of which are farmers in the North Central Region. Following USDA NIFA approval guidelines, eight projects were selected for a total of \$2,104,375, and the official start date of the projects is September 1, 2021, and they will end on August 31, 2023. Proposals must involve institutions from at least two different states in the North Central Region, consist of both an Extension Liaison and Industry (farmer) Liaison to support applicability to the industry and delivery of results, have three letters of support from industry members not directly involved in the project, among other criteria. Reach out to your state Aquaculture Extension Specialist should you have questions about any of the projects. Proposals for all newly funded projects will soon be posted on the NCRAC web site [North Central Regional Aquaculture Center \(NCRAC\)](#). The selected Project Title, Chairperson, and Funding Amount, in alphabetical order (title), are as follows:

Title: A comprehensive study of processing fish in local facilities for local food systems
Chairperson: Kwamena Quagrainie (Purdue University)
Funding: \$201,834

Title: Addressing critical aquaculture-marketing-oriented applied research and outreach (phase 2)
Chairperson: J. Stuart Carlton (Purdue University)
Funding: \$168,819

Title: Asian carp muscle as an initial dietary protein source and palatability enhancer for successful production of yellow perch and walleye fingerlings
Chairperson: Karolina Kwasek (Southern Illinois University-Carbondale)
Funding: \$198,614

Title: Developing social license for trout aquaculture in the North Central Region
Chairperson: Jonathan van Senten (Virginia Tech)
Funding: \$280,163

Title: Development of consumer educational materials on seafood and aquaculture
Chairperson: Amy Schrank (University of Minnesota Sea Grant)
Funding: \$225,505

Title: Improving fish health in the NCR integrating Extension with the development of alternative disease prevention methods
Chairperson: Thomas P. Loch (Michigan State University)
Funding: \$601,387

Title: Intensification of first year largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) using alternative pond-based production systems
Chairperson: Matthew A. Smith (The Ohio State University)
Funding: \$328,367

Title: Sustainable aquaculture: development of new quantitative metrics for use in marketing aquaculture products
Chairperson: Paul B. Brown (Purdue University)
Funding: \$99,686