

Fish Producers in Michigan (Aquaculture and Commercial) Coffee Hour

Wednesday, April 29th
10 am ET

Ground Rules

- Zoom
- Respect
- Be Kind
- Not a decision meeting, it's a listening session





MISSION

Michigan Sea Grant supports research, outreach, and education to enhance sustainable use of Great Lakes resources, benefiting the environment, the quality of life, and the Michigan, Great Lakes, and national economy.

VISION

Our vision is healthy and sustainable Great Lakes resources achieved through an integrated program that engages universities and public and private sectors.

Overview

- Purpose
- Discussion
- Wrap-up
- Needs being heard...
- Resources
- Next steps?



Purpose

Plan for a new normal.

Plan for more changes.

Be flexible.

Embrace the change.

This is exciting for rural entrepreneurs!

Plan for success.

Be creative.

Know your capacity.

Where are YOUR gaps?

We want to focus on your challenges, strategies,
and needs to be successful.

Discussion

1. What are the major challenges facing your business or the businesses you work with due to Coronavirus?
2. What are strategies that your businesses and/or communities have begun implementing or envision happening in the near future?
3. What do you need to be successful (i.e., funding, information, communication, policy, training, etc.)?

Wrap-Up: Challenges

- Reduction of restaurant and wholesale markets
- Reduce workforce to stay safe = reduced capacity
- Social distancing in work places
- Communication about evolving regulatory policies
- Pay fishing and tourism
- Online sales work, but time consuming and costly – not ideal for a quick change during a crises

Wrap-Up: Strategies

- Created pick-up window to isolate processing and selling/drivers – No contact sales
- Tip Jars
- Creating COVID protocols for workforce safety (but with little guidance)
- Alternative Storage and Packaging Individually
- Alternative Markets
 - Food boxes/meal boxes are very popular
- Filling the gap from bigger processors and protein processing

Wrap-Up: Needs

- Cataloging resource capacities – website?
Needs/Resources/staff/labor exchange?
- Facilitating networking opportunities and matching of needs/gaps
- Best Practices/protocols for working with COVID-19
- Talk to MDARD – stay up to date with any changes in regulations
- Promoting local markets, retail/direct sales model education
- Distribution away from saturated markets/ or can we expand the local market for volume?
- COVID-19 testing for workforce

Needs we're hearing... (before meeting)

1. Adequate fish processing space that's available and food grade
2. Connecting businesses and farmers markets/consumers for business sustainability; develop new business plans
3. To let people know that fish is still available and know how to find it; public contact information
4. Sanitation protocols around COVID-19
5. Live preparing and cooking demos/educational videos for consumers
6. Improve our TRL (Technology Readiness Level)
7. Training one-on-one with software platforms and/or technical trainings

Resources

Fish Specific

- [Michigan Sea Grant Article](#)
- [National Sea Grant Financial Relief Resources](#)

General

- [E-Commerce Direct Sales Online Webinar](#)
- [CDC Grocery and Retail Store Workers](#)
- [US Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Michigan Economic Development Corporation](#)
- [MSU Extension Resources](#)

Next Steps?

- Another meeting? Yes – will be more resource oriented
- Final Comments?
- Feedback
 - <https://bit.ly/2Y997UG>

We will also follow-up with an email.

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U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442;

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