



Making the Fisheries Extension Connection: S.C. Sea Grant Extension & the S.C. Commercial Shrimp Industry Crisis

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S.C. SEA GRANT
EXTENSION
PROGRAM



ABSTRACT

The U.S. commercial shrimp industry is undergoing an economic crisis fueled by changing market conditions and the influx of imported shrimp from foreign countries. In response to the crisis, the commercial shrimp industry in South Carolina (S.C.) was awarded \$5.6 million in economic assistance from the federal government in 2003. The use of the awarded funds was determined utilizing input from an industry-derived task force (S.C. Shrimp Industry Task Force) along with advisors from state and private organizations and facilitated by Clemson Extension Service. Coincidentally, the South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium (SCSGC) reinstated a Fisheries Extension and Enhancement (FEE) program in 2003 to respond to the state's growing extension needs related to marine fisheries. The FEE program at the SCSGC has been instrumental in facilitating the communication and exchange of industry-related research, state/federal fisheries management information, and technical assistance to the commercial shrimp industry in S.C. Currently, the FEE program is identifying additional extension needs in the recreational/commercial fishing sectors in the state to include collaboration with state and federal fisheries management agencies. Results from the efforts of the SCSGC-FEE program will allow targeted commercial and recreational stakeholders to make the best informed decisions regarding marine resources using science-based information.

FOSTERING NEW PARTNERSHIPS

The South Carolina Shrimp Fishery Assistance (SCSFA) project was developed as a result of and in response to collaborative planning by the South Carolina shrimp industry facilitated by Clemson Extension. Through the project, Clemson University and other partners bring together industry associations and government agencies and coordinates their efforts to help South Carolina shrimpers. SCSFA participants include:

- Individual Shrimpers
- Dock Owners
- The S.C. Shrimpers Association
- The S.C. Seafood Alliance
- The Southern Shrimp Alliance
- The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium
- Clemson University
- Berkeley, Charleston, Dorchester Council of Governments
- The S.C. Department of Natural Resources



From these partners, a **S.C. Shrimp Industry Task Force** was formed to create a strategic plan for establishing an economically sustainable shrimp fishery in South Carolina.

As a result of federal economic assistance funds, made possible through the efforts of U.S. Senator Ernest Hollings and others, the Task Force became an advisory group to Clemson University for the use and distribution of funds to the S.C. Shrimp Industry.

The Task Force voted to utilize the funds for,

- Direct relief to the S.C. Shrimp Industry,
- Research and education projects, and
- Marketing projects.
- Research projects were conducted by Clemson University and other projects were conducted by participating partners of the S.C. Shrimp Fishery Assistance Project.

PROJECT DEVELOPMENTS & PROGRESS

- **DISASTER RELIEF:** \$2M distributed to vessels, docks, and shrimp related businesses
- **ECONOMIC:** Industry inventory, cost-benefit analyses, business planning
- **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Freezing, processing, & storage capacity options
- **FOOD SCIENCE/PACKAGING:** Freezing, retort packaging, bacterial/chemical/sensory tests on wild caught VS. imported shrimp
- **MARKETING:** Case study comparisons on niche markets, travel & tourism marketing strategies
- **S.C. Seafood Alliance:** Advertising campaign for local shrimp
- **S.C. Shrimper's Association:** Regional Shrimp Festivals
- **Southern Shrimp Alliance:** Anti-dumping petition litigation funds
- **Clemson Extension:** Hiring of Shrimp Quality Extension Associate
- **Trade Adjustment Assistance Program:** Economic assistance for shrimp producers affected by imported shrimp

www.clemson.edu/scshrimp/index.htm

S.C. SEA GRANT FISHERIES EXTENSION – RESPONSE TO NEEDS OF SHRIMP INDUSTRY

Consequently to these funds being acquired by the S.C. Shrimp Industry, the S.C. Sea Grant Extension program (SCSGEP) was in the process of re-establishing its Fisheries Extension & Enhancement program.

Due to the urgent extension needs of the shrimp industry and a delay in federal grant money to the SCSGEP for implementing the Fisheries Extension & Enhancement program, the Task Force earmarked one-year of funding to hire a fisheries extension specialist employed by the SCSGEP. The fisheries extension specialist worked exclusively with the S.C. shrimp industry in 2004 and continues extension efforts with the industry.

Examples of shrimp industry extension efforts through the SCSGEP include:

- **EDUCATIONAL SEMINARS:** Connecting shrimp fishermen with South Atlantic Fishery Management Council staff to learn about the implications of changes to the federal shrimp fishery management plan in the South Atlantic region and how to publicly participate in the process.
- **TECHNICAL TRAINING:** Providing classroom training to shrimp fishermen on business planning, quality assurance of shrimp products, options for alternative enterprises, and shrimp anti-dumping petition paperwork/applications.
- **TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER:** Translating and extending research results from S.C. Shrimp Fishery Assistance project pertaining to marketing strategies, industry infrastructure options, and regional shrimp industry strategies.
- **ENGAGING COLLABORATION:** Facilitating interactions and meetings with the S.C. Shrimper's Association, S.C. Department of Natural Resources, S.C. Seafood Alliance, and other industry, state, and governmental organizations to assist with collaborative projects regarding shrimp marketing and advertising, state shrimp fishery management issues, and development of industry infrastructure (freezing, processing, and storage capacity).



S.C. Sea Grant participates in the activities of the Beaufort Shrimp Festival with the S.C. Shrimper's Association



EXPANDING FISHERIES EXTENSION IN SOUTH CAROLINA

As more and more of the U.S. population moves to the coast to live, vacation, and recreate, the need for fisheries extension efforts will also grow and programs must expand into the many facets of both commercial and recreational fisheries.

Examples of the SCSGEP areas of programmatic focus include:

South Atlantic Sea Grant Fisheries Extension & Enhancement Committee:

- Regional coordination of fisheries extension efforts in the South Atlantic Sea Grant network (NC, SC, GA, & east coast of FL)
- Meetings with state & federal fishery managers/ outreach staff was held to identify areas of collaboration and increase communication between states and agencies regarding fisheries issues.
- Creation of South Atlantic fisheries extension listserv.

Blue Crab Industry Initiative:

- Collaborate with S.C. Department of Natural Resources, to conduct a socioeconomic survey of the state's blue crab fishery to determine the effects of a limited entry system on the fishery prior to the passing of legislation.
- Additional work will include organizational training and building for establishing a S.C. Blue Crab Fishermen's Association and cooperative research projects.

S.C. Recreational Fisheries Needs Assessment:

- Collaborate with Clemson University and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources to conduct focus group meetings/interviews with sectors of the recreational fishing and SCUBA diving industries to determine extension programming needs for the state.
- Results will drive program focus for these sectors to include cooperative research efforts.

ADDITIONAL PLANNED ACTIVITIES/PRODUCTS:

- Waterfront Access Issues and Economic Valuation
- Common Benthic Marine Fish/Invertebrate Field Identification Guide
- Diamondback Terrapin Bycatch Research & Education
- Charterboat Operators Workshops
- Sustainable Seafood Initiative with clam/shrimp industries

WHO WE ARE & WHAT WE DO

The S.C. Sea Grant Extension program,

- Operates as a joint program of the Clemson University Extension Service and the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium.
- Delivers science-based information and programs about coastal and marine issues to community stakeholders.
- Focuses extension efforts in six main program areas:

- Aquaculture
- Business & Economics
- Coastal Communities & Development
- Coastal Environmental Quality
- Fisheries & Living Marine Resources
- Hazards & Ocean Observing

www.sceagrants.org/extension.htm

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON

FISHERIES EXTENSION in the

S.C. SEA GRANT EXTENSION PROGRAM, VISIT:

www.sceagrants.org/extension/extension_fisheries.htm