AQUACULTURE IN CALIFORNIA

As demand for seafood continues to increase, aquaculture, or farming in the water, is an environmentally responsible and especially efficient method of protein production, and an option we must consider to complement our sustainably managed wild fisheries.

What does California Grow?

Abalone, algae, bass, bluegill, carp, catfish, mussels, oysters, perch, seaweed, salmon (outside of California), sturgeon, tilapia, trout and more.

Southern California Identified for Aquaculture by NOAA

In December 2021, the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) published Atlases identifying small areas in the U.S. that may be suitable for marine aquaculture, including ten options along the coast of Southern California. The Atlases are powerful scientific tools with 200 data layers that took many factors into consideration, including security, energy, environment, infrastructure, oceanography and commercial fishing.

The Most Sustainable Protein

We must look to the ocean for alternative means to produce a sustainable food supply. The aquaculture industry utilizes science-based practices to produce farm-raised seafood in the most efficient way possible, which helps protect and preserve our natural resources in a changing climate. Finfish aquaculture is the most sustainable and efficient method of animal protein production. Further, technological advancements in feed production, using soy and microalgae oil, have led to the development of new plant-based feed solutions.

Other forms of aquaculture like shellfish and seaweed farming require no feed inputs, and actually act as filters to clean the ocean environment.

How Does Aquaculture Address Food Security?

Food security and food safety start locally. U.S. aquaculture producers must adhere to strict environmental and product safety rules and regulations, so that Californians can be certain that the fish they're eating is safe. 85% of the seafood consumed in the U.S. is imported, with 50% of that seafood coming from farms, so, why not grow our own local food?

RESOURCES

California Aquaculture Association
The Aquarium of the Pacific
Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute
UC Santa Barbara
NOAA Aquaculture AOAs

Contact: admin@strongerthroughseafood.org

Sources: California Aquaculture Association, USDA's Census of Aquaculture 2018, NOAA