



NORTH CAROLINA



**AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE**

2026

**WEDNESDAY, THURSDAY, & FRIDAY
MARCH 25-27**

Crystal Coast Civic Center
203 College Cir, Morehead City, NC 28557

AGENDA



DAY 1

Wednesday, March 25

8:00

REGISTRATION & NETWORKING BREAKFAST

9:00

SESSION 1: BLUE ECONOMY WORKFORCE TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Lisa Jackson - STEM East
Kelly Russell - Perquimans County HS
David Cerino - Carteret Community College
Steve Hall - NC State University
Niels Lindquist - UNC Chapel Hill
Ken Halanych - UNC Wilmington
Tom Schultz - Duke University
Emily Yeager - East Carolina University

Growing our state's aquaculture industry goes hand in hand with development of associated blue economy sectors. This session aims to provide an overview of the education and training opportunities at K-12 schools, community colleges, and universities in the region.

10:15

COFFEE & TRADE SHOW BREAK

10:45

SESSION 2: SEAFOOD IN THE BLUE ECONOMY

Becky Rose - NC Catch/Balckbeard's Grill/Rose Seafood
Monica Smith - Miss Gina's Shrimp
Cody Faison - Ghost Fleet Oyster Co
Alex Chouljenko - NCSU Seafood Lab
Barry Nash - NC Catch
Rod Kirk - Carteret County Economic Development
Bianca Shoneman - NC East Alliance

Growing our state's seafood industry requires innovative approaches to product line development and collaboration within the industry to establish reputations for quality products. This session aims to provide an overview of different product development, marketing, branding, and sales strategies as well as agri-tourism and eco-tourism related to seafood.

12:00

LUNCH AND TRADESHOW BREAK

12:30

Lunch Keynote Speaker

David Cerino - Public Private Partnerships

Lunch provided by NC Catch, Miss Gina's Fresh Shrimp, Blackbeard's Grill, and Rose Seafood



1:30

SESSION 3: RESEARCH AND COASTAL RESILIENCE

Chad Thomas - NC Marine and Estuary Foundation
Sonya Carlson - NC Aquariums
Riley Lewis - White Oak Riverkeeper
Niels Lindquist - Sandbar Oyster Company
John Than - Sea and Shoreline
Zach Harrison - NC Division of Marine Fisheries
Linus Stoltz - Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation

Aquaculture can play an important role in the management and enhancement of coastal ecosystems. This session will provide examples of the intersection of aquaculture with natural resource and coastal infrastructure management.

2:30

TRADESHOW BREAK

2:45

SESSION 4: STRATEGIC PLANNING PANEL DISCUSSION

Lavonda Daniels - Array Community Development Corporation
Jessica Wilkinson - RTI International
Trey Goodson - NC East Alliance
Ryan Bethea - NC Growth
Rod Kirk - Carteret County Economic Development
Laura Kilian - NC Farm Bureau, NC AgLeads
David Payne - NC Department of Environmental Quality

In this panel discussion we will identify key resources, policies, and programs that are critical to growing the seafood sector and related blue economy industries in North Carolina. Panelists will share how targeted economic development tailored to our assets and market opportunities can spur investment and job creation.

4:00

BLUE ECONOMY CAREER FAIR & TRADESHOW NETWORKING HOUR

6:00

AQUA TRIVIA AT TIGHT LINES PUB & BREWING CO. 709 ARENDELL ST, MOREHEAD CITY, NC 28557

AGENDA



DAY 2

Thursday, March 26

7:00

DEPART MOREHEAD CITY FOR NCSU PAMLICO AQUACULTURE FIELD LABORATORY
2002 HICKORY POINT RD. AURORA, NC 27806

8:30

ARRIVE AT NCSU PAMLICO AQUACULTURE FIELD LABORATORY
2002 HICKORY POINT RD. AURORA, NC 27806

9:30

DEPART PAFL FOR CAROLINA FISHERIES
6323 SPRING CREEK RD, AURORA, NC 27806

10:00

ARRIVE AT CAROLINA FISHERIES
6323 SPRING CREEK RD, AURORA, NC 27806

10:50

DEPART CAROLINA FISHERIES FOR LIGHTHOUSE SHOAL OYSTER CO.
191 OLD LUPTON RD, MERRITT, NC 28556

11:30

ARRIVE AT LIGHTHOUSE SHOAL OYSTER CO.
191 OLD LUPTON RD, MERRITT, NC 28556

12:30

DEPART LIGHTHOUSE SHOAL OYSTER CO. FOR CRYSTAL COAST CIVIC CENTER
203 COLLEGE CIR, MOREHEAD CITY, NC 28557

12:30-
3:00pm

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN HEADING BACK TO MOREHEAD CITY

3:00

TRADESHOW REOPENS

4:00

INDUSTRY STAKEHOLDER WELCOME AND REMARKS
Garey Fox - Dean at NCSU College of Agriculture and Life Sciences
Dr. Joe French - Assistant Commissioner of Agricultural Services at NCDA&CS
Laura Kilian - Associate State Legislative Director at NC Farm Bureau

4:30

AQUABUSINESS PRESENTATION INFO SESSIONS

5:30

GOT-TO-BE-NC AQUABUSINESS SOCIAL WITH SPONSOR BOOTH HIGHLIGHT SESSIONS

6:00

GOT-TO-BE-NC SEAFOOD EXPO



AGENDA



DAY 3

Friday, March 27

8:30 WELCOME- SESSION OVERVIEW

Mike Frinsko- NC State University Extension/Applied Ecology

8:40 POLICY UPDATES

NC Aquaculture Association/National Aquaculture Association - NCAA Board of Directors
NC Farm Bureau - Laura Kilian

9:15 INDUSTRY UPDATE

Finfish- Steve Hall, NC State University Bio. and Agr. Engineering
Shellfish- Eric Herbst, NC Sea Grant
Economics- Pete Anderson, NC Department of Agriculture Marketing

10:00 TRADE SHOW BREAK

10:30-12:00 CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Finfish Session - *Upstairs: Oakwood Suites*

NCSU/NCCE Research Update
Alex Chouljenko, *NCSU Seafood Lab*

UNCW Research Update
Pat Carroll, *UNCW Center for Marine Science*

Cold Banking Striped Bass Broodstock
Bobby Clark, *NCSU Pamlico Aquaculture Field Lab*

Pond-Side Striped Bass Larval Production
Erimi Kendrick, *NCSU Applied Ecology*

Striped Bass Larviculture Production
Mike Frinsko, *NCSU Extension/Applied Ecology*

Robotics in Aquaculture
Steve Hall, *NCSU Bio. and Agr. Engineering*

Shellfish Session - *Main Ballroom*

UNCW Shellfish Research Hatchery & Program Update
Ami Wilbur, *UNCW Center for Marine Science*

Sudden & Unusual Mortality Syndrome: Research & Status Update
Tal Ben-Horin, *NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine*

Reducing Shellfish Mortality
Rachel Noble, *UNC Institute for Marine Science*

Shellfish Aquaculture Regulatory & Leasing Update
Casey Silva, *NC Division of Marine Fisheries*

Water Quality & Sanitation Update
Shannon Jenkins, *NC Division of Marine Fisheries*

NC Shellfish Growers Association Update
Chris Matteo, *NC Shellfish Growers Association*

12:00 TRADESHOW BREAK

LUNCH

12:30 Lunch provided by *Onley the Best, B&J's Seafood, and North Carolina Fisheries Association*

MIKE FRINKSO

12:45 Keynote Speaker
Striped Bass Aquaculture: From Research to Commercialization

AUBREY ONLEY

12:55 Keynote Speaker
Domesticated Striped Bass Production in North Carolina: A Producers Experience

1:15 CONFERENCE CONCLUSION



B & J Seafood Co. Inc.