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Steve Dolinsky
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 Now I see why



Seeding kelp lines between matt rafts. (Photo: Paul Dobbins, Ocean Approved)

Mussel farms in Maine will grow more kelp

 **UNITED STATES**
 Friday, January 20, 2012, 03:50 (GMT + 9)

Maine Sea Grant, based at the University of Maine, is joining hands with Maine shellfish farmers to build knowhow in growing kelp to better exploit the USD 6 billion worldwide seaweed industry.

Marine Extension Team members Dana Morse and Sarah Redmond are collaborating with industry partners to build a demonstration hatchery at the UMaine Centre for Cooperative Aquaculture Research in Franklin, Maine, with help from a USD 19,999 grant from the [Maine Aquaculture Innovation Centre](#).

The industry partners are Pemaquid Mussel Farms (Carter Newell, Peter Fischer, Joe Larrabee, Tim Levesque), Evan Young of Blue Hill Bay Mussels, Matt Moretti of Wild Ocean Aquaculture, and Ocean Approved, the first commercial kelp producer in the US.

The pilot project is a leading Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) venture to produce kelp on commercial mussel farms in the US. IMTA is an alternative approach to standard mono-culture aquaculture believed to slash the environmental impacts of traditional commercial aquaculture systems.

Researchers chose sugar kelp (*Latissima saccharina*) for this project because of the existing expertise in producing seedlings from Ocean Approved and wild harvesters and the existing market. Sugar kelp is a native species in Maine and it grows quickly and can be delivered into a burgeoning market.

Through photosynthesis and simple growth, seaweeds remove carbon dioxide and nitrogen from the atmosphere.

Some varieties of seaweed contain half their weight as oil and can thus be potentially used as a biofuel.

The goal of the pilot project is to spread know-how in kelp farming among shellfish farmers; develop communications between kelp producers and buyers while improving profitability for both sectors; collect observations on environmental factors and growth to make site selection and production methods better; and continue technology transfer on kelp production to other potential shellfish or seaweed farmers.

Researchers also see the project as an opportunity to evaluate the profitability of growing this particular algae. Seaweed aquaculture is promising as an option for fishers who wish to diversify their income and a way to keep working waterfronts active.

Lobster fishers could grow sugar kelp as a winter crop in the offseason. The activity would take much of the same expertise and equipment, and the crop is ready for harvest in April-June, just when many lobster fishers begin suffering from a lack of continued income.

Project partners began deploying seeded lines last November in Casco Bay, between the mussel rafts of Wild Ocean Aquaculture. The project has been taken to other sites to study kelp growth in Blue Hill Bay, Lamoine, Belfast and Walpole, and sites in Stonington are next.

By Natalia Real



MORE NEWS

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Apr 5, 12:00 (GMT + 9):
 Easter recess
China
Apr 5, 05:00 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - China to halt import of Indian seafood from 1 June
Canada
Apr 5, 04:50 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - Lobster prices too high, boycotting buyers say
United States
Apr 5, 04:40 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - Oyster fishermen claim regulatory foul
Finland
Apr 5, 04:30 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - Launching of fisheries research vessel in Finland
Palau
Apr 5, 04:20 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - Last Chinese vessel licensed by Palau 6 years ago
United States
Apr 5, 04:10 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - South Bronx business touts farm fishing in trash cans
United States
Apr 5, 04:00 (GMT + 9):
 IN BRIEF - Oyster safety is focus of regulators
Chile
Apr 5, 03:10 (GMT + 9):
 Aquaculture Centre achieves record scallop larvae harvest
Viet Nam
Apr 5, 02:30 (GMT + 9):
 Bianfishco lays off workers indefinitely
Sri Lanka
Apr 5, 01:30 (GMT + 9):
 First fish cannery opens in Galle
Chile
Apr 5, 00:50 (GMT + 9):
 New measures to update maritime licensing system
Spain
Apr 4, 23:50 (GMT + 9):
 Aquaculture potential in Andalusia appealing to Morocco
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Sweden The grey seals in the Baltic Sea compete for fish with the fishing industry. The seals locally eat about the same quantities of cod, common whitefish, salmon, sea trout and eel as those taken by fishermen.
- 2 Fishing for forage fish should be cut by half: scientists**
United States Fishing for "forage fish" should be halved globally to account for their critical role as prey for larger species, recommends an expert group of marine scientists.
- 3 Caribbean coral reef decline started a century ago: study**
United States The decline of Caribbean coral reefs has been linked to the recent effects of human-induced climate change. However, new research led by scientists at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego suggests

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an even earlier cause.

4 New foundation created to help pole-and-line fisheries

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